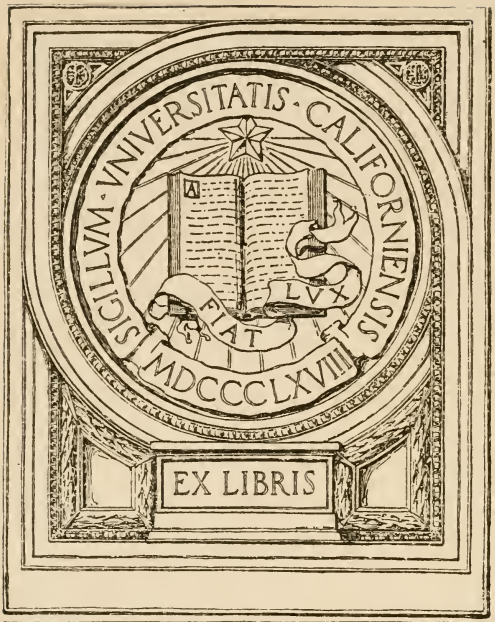
SIGILLVM · VNIVERSITATIS · CALIFORNIENSIS
LVX
FIAT
MDCCCLXVIII
EX LIBRIS

ESSAYS OUT OF HOURS

ESSAYS
OUT OF HOURS

BY

CHARLES SEARS BALDWIN

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
91 AND 93 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
LONDON, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA
1907

THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, U. S. A.

TO

G. E. B.

PREFACE

THE original publication of these essays is in each case indicated by the table of contents. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the courtesy with which I have been permitted to reprint, and to thank the editors.

C. S. B.

NEW HAVEN, June, 1907.

CONTENTS

False Gypsies

ONE OF THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN NEW YORK, and one of the most exacting for young purses, had once its vogue among discontented youths of irrepressible individuality. There they found, on happier days, some popular tenor, an approachable merchant from Martinique, a talkative *boulevardier*, or some other incarnation of their Mistress France. At least they found one another. When plain William had failed once more to vend his erotic verse, and the undoubted distinction of Edward's black mane had not yet sufficed to palm off his impressionism, and Herbert had a thing for *Shady Side*, not quite finished, it was a distinct solace to leave work for condolence in the pose of the Latin Quarter. You sauntered into the café, saluted the very business-like woman at the counter, found a loose French weekly, and sat beside a marble-topped table at

the window. The others would arrive; and together you would drink toward a serener view of life. To have hope rather than faith, to be idle under the guise of research into humanity, to indulge a smattering of French and a taste for spirits, to talk dispassionately of vaudeville, — these made you eligible; this was Bohemian. *Deux mazagrans,* said with quiet assurance, was almost equivalent to conversation. If you expatiated upon symbolism without boggling at the absinthe, you were a Bohemian professed. What have cigarettes and uncooked criticism in a French restaurant to do with Bohemia?

Something, no doubt. Bohemia may be entered by the Pass of Discontent. Revolt from the conventional, as it may happily lead into generous enthusiasm for whatever asserts individuality, may arise from the assertion of one's own individuality. Only, the assertion is not tolerable for long without proof; and merely to put on the manner of Bohemia is a convention, like any

other. Alas! for the perpetual youths at the marble-topped table, it was the cloak of indolence, sham Bohemia dissipating the alms of Philistia. A murky basement not far away showed franker stuff. The company that met with friendly nods by the long tables had already weighed the price of freedom. Each held his half-success in what he loved and believed, and the fellowship of those who measured life so, worth a hall bed-room, and plain, irregular meals. The cutting away of pretence, instead of bringing a crop of cynicism, left the ground clear for the best of talk, for a criticism of life which, though sometimes thin, was never unreal. They were not artists and poets, nor even journalists, but second-rate illustrators, story-writers, and essayists in the dear leisure of a newspaper day, serious students of ideas, — ideas hasty enough, it might chance, but still ideas. So dinner was an unaffected gayety, — the higher if there had been no luncheon, — asking no stimulus beyond the cheap ordinary wine and

the man across the table. The low room clashed with conversation and laughter, reeked with pipe-smoke; but there was no other intemperance. Until the foothold was gained, the mastery won, this for them was life. Brave travelers, they chose Bohemia for their crossing.

And Bohemia repaid the choice. At the long tables one was free to wear his own guise without apology, and sure of the welcome he gave. It was the code that you might not address a novice, however promising he, however talkative you, until he opened the way; but that you might smoke your rat-tail cigar on the back of a friend's chair, or on the table after the apples and cheese. When music came in from the street, harp or guitar and violin tucking themselves between tables against the wall, the whole roomful would sometimes chink the measure on glasses, or sing a chorus from Trovatore. On one supreme evening the taciturn Colonel left his spaghetti, flung a coat-tail over each arm, and with a fine

decorous abandon danced up and down the midst, precisely nimble. There was a roar of applause at this hyperbole of the spirit of the place; but the Colonel, having had his fling, resumed his fork without word or smile. He had expressed himself.

Withal it would have been hard to find a tavern stricter. The few women that came were reporters, eager sometimes in talk, smoking when they chose, but rarely expansive, and commonly in the sober dignity of middle age; or minor singers with their husbands, a hard-working few, less adept in conversation. Of drinking there was very little. Money was too hard won, and this was distinctly a place to eat in. When an Italian opera singer and his presumable patron stumbled in by chance one evening and talked tipsily loud — no more — Teresa was in from the kitchen, ordering them from her house in brave Italian and broken English. The company silently approved, and they never came again.

For its little while, the time of passage,

this was a solace in discipline. To be free, to be worthy of your neighbor's keen question, to give and take the ease of simple gayety that you may the better summon yourself, it is a colored life. But not for long. Rather, "Woe is me that I have my habitation among the tents of Kedar." They that dwell in Bohemia because they have unlearned the way forth suffer dreary and repulsive decline. An old gypsy is tolerable only if he be a real gypsy, not in choice or lapse of will, but in the blood. This is the race whose journey has no end, for whom life and all the world is Bohemia, only a space for travel. Moving always on the highway, stopping always short of the city, these are no shiftless tramps in wagons, but a race doomed to make no progress except in physical distance, and to make that always, to kill time. For any but the blood to spend a lifetime on the road is as unnatural as for this blood to keep house. The real gypsies are happy, doubtless, as the nomads of the world's childhood. Perpetual youth is per-

petual limitation; once the limitation is seen, intolerable to any zeal for manhood.

To us others, not of the blood, even to the least conventional of an elaborate civilization, Bohemia must be a country of inns, — inns for the poor adventurous young, responsive to the freedom in others which they must have in themselves. Like the actual Switzerland, it is only for our summer. A careless while to have no home is to some men, fewer women, an exhilaration. To let slip the hope of home is a cowardice or a curse. Clap pack on back, then, or ship as stowaways for the seacoast of Bohemia. But be ready for random fare and a truss of hay; be ready also to go on, or else to return, even to Philistia, not ungrateful for memories.

Salad

A SOUP GARDEN IS A PHRASE OF THE FRENCH, too nice for America. Our gardens are indiscriminate; enough distinction merely to have a garden. And indeed, for an American moved to express a further distinction, to assert himself against provincialism, better than a soup garden would be a salad garden. To soup, though it be accepted in too narrow a sense, America is largely converted. Even mountain taverns dispense a diluted tomato sauce that often has merit of heat. But salad is not even known except to the unrepresentative few.

That salad is gone but a little way, and is still a singularity, appears when American women that read book reviews are found to know it only as involving fowl or lobster, and to buy dressing even for these, as for their boots, by the bottle. She shall not learn the rudiments of this craft who will not

forget the grosser mayonnaise. And since, under pressure of convention, as for what is by barbarism called a tea, she will hanker back after the fleshpots, it is oftener he that learns. In matters of food, what moves through man alone stems a tide of distrust slowly.

Nor is this without its worth in supporting the head of the table; but let the head keep a manly humility. Let that man alone turn to mayonnaise who has labored seven years without mustard, and used eggs as they were golden. It is a woman's dressing, at best offering satiety, like the sugarings of the sex; at less than best belying the name of salad by making what it touches less savory. The elements of all salads are oil and vinegar, with salt and pepper. Until these are his familiars, let no man try beyond. That the oil be French or Italian marks the fixing of personality. The vinegar may well add tarragon, the pepper be from Nepaul. But none of these is vital; the proportion of each to the material is all, and the happy hand.

The material is every green herb for the service of man. Fruit salads, though they open many inventions, are but toys to a serious return to nature. First, let him explore all the greens of a large market, and combine boldly among the vegetables carried cold from yesterday's table. Lettuce, though alone among herbs it has vogue, is but ancillary. To use no other is like knowing wine only as champagne. In fact, among herbs lettuce has least character. Therefore, after the delicacy of its first freshness, its use is in conjunction. But water cress and celery should be either very thick in the bowl or very sparse; for they pungently put down other savors. Beyond this frontier is a world without rule, where each man may be a discoverer and a benefactor, if he cast away prejudice. Prejudice cannot consist with salad. They that abjure cabbage are proud stomachs, and they that fear onion have given their souls to their neighbors. Salad without onion is like blank verse; it needs the master hand to prevail without the

rhyme. Unprejudiced, he that finds not a salad for every day, or fails of happy solutions, is either improvident or dull.

More practical minds will see thrift as well as variety in the dispossession of flesh meat. Food without fire, pleasant ministry to digestion in despite of the cook, may yet win the mistress. Meantime our hope is for the master. By a knack at the bowl, be it but to use an old savory spoon, or to slice his radishes, or to insinuate garlic or cheese, he keeps his state. His digestion is not arrested by fear; his conversation is secure. Unless he be morose, he may reign at his table.

Travel

THE CURIOUS FEW WHO LINGER OVER DICTIONARIES have been amused at finding travel one with travail, so far has the sting of the word been drawn by time. While the one road of men into the world has remained labor, the many roads over the world have been paved with ease. In arm-chairs and beds, by land or sea, we were there and we are here. There is no pain of passage. The old traveler settled his estate and asked for prayers in church; the new traveler takes his affairs aboard and traffics as he goes. Where there is no interruption, when upon a thought I am elsewhere, remaining myself the same, what is left of travel?

And while we have made travel ease, we have made it a superfluity. Will not the telegraph serve my business? Then let me step into my closet to talk a thousand miles. As for the old grand tour, most men can

see Venice as well by lime-light as by moonlight. Cathedrals lie on parlor tables; and Praxiteles is brought to a boarding-house. Shall the ring of tourists gaping about a guide in the Louvre see more in her of Melos than the student with his penny print? For the elect few there may be with a picture its proper music of race, its language, its literature. One of the widest travelers of my acquaintance had seen France better, ay, and heard it, in his own house than ever he could when at last he walked the soil. We that so well may travel may often as well stay at home.

For distance is but relative. The next county was as distant to our forefathers as now our antipodes. And there is more in this. At the age of four I thought the next village as far away as now I find Alaska. Was that earlier journey any the less travel? Surely I saw as many marvels; I was opened as much to the unknown. Nor has travel ever been measured by distance. It is not in the miles, but in the man. "I have

traveled," said Thoreau, "a good deal in Concord." He also was a traveler who wrote that *Journey about my Room.* We shall have travel so long as we have travelers.

And so long shall we have travelers' tales. The whole world is ventilated by the Associated Press. The daily report from Abyssinia is enhanced by Sunday's photographs. But wherever Mandeville goes, or Marco Polo, whether to Persia or the pole, on elephant or automobile or on his two feet, there will be travelers' tales, because there is a traveler. It is an ancient mariner that we cannot choose but hear. It is Daniel Defoe that will hold us, whether from London to Land's End or from London to the well-charted isle of Juan Fernandez. It is that charming person who called himself Mandeville. There is a traveler's tale wherever there is a man with the wit to travel.

Travel has never meant, nor can it mean now, anything less than escape from the

commonplace. Routine of shop or of sleeping-car, that alone is travel which ventures beyond this into parts unknown. And as breach of custom will always demand an effort of individuality, so travel must still have travail. Without courage to try the unknown, without weariness of the unpaved road, I could never have had the traveler's joy of discovering what this new world hid for me. Listen. It is only ten miles from Quebec; but I discovered it. It is in a country store kept by a *habitant;* but of country stores you may after all know as little as of *habitants.* I who discovered it tell you that, crossing the road from the pink parsonage at twilight, I mounted four steps into a dark room. When I asked for supper and bed — But this is not a traveler's tale; it is an essay on travel. And its moral is that travel must still be had on the old terms.

"Not as One that Beateth the Air"

THOREAU'S SHED IN THE WOODS IS IMPRACTICABLE to many people who yet will not admit that it stands for a fallacy. Rather they see in his theory something which, for all they cannot achieve the practice, remains hopeful as well as dear. If only I might simplify my life by more direct application of my labor to my real wants! This is not merely the cry of a few reactionaries. It expresses the instinctive protest against that modern complication of complexity which seems to miss the end in the means. So much of our energy is applied indirectly that we seem forever held out of touch. My own bread, baked on the antiquated hearth of my own building with wood of my own cutting, is doubtless no more the diet of philosophy than baker's bread, baked over gas

by certified members of an international union. Indeed, to-day's pot of porridge, if I will so simplify my meal, takes the less time from meditation by simmering on a gas stove. The very type of modern complexity may further simplicity. Nay, in many quiet lodgings it does actually dispense at once with servants and with the distracting community of the boarding-house. But it leaves a want that can never be antiquated, the human want of labor for human hands. Thoreau's hard hoeing supplied his bean-pot as well as his blood and his eye. Cannot I so feed mine?

Answer is instant and loud. The division of labor has bred a spawn of specialists for muscles and modern nerves. A clipping from the advertisements of the last magazine, a statistical post-card, will bring full prescription, with machinery of pulleys and rubber. Only to stand up to the wall or crouch on the chamber floor, pulling and pushing a good half-hour twice a day; or, more agreeably dispensing with machinery,

to stretch and supple the frame by merely waving arms and legs, weaving the trunk, dancing, gesticulating, rising and sinking, — that will answer. It will answer. The blood of the sedentary will stir. But why is the answer so wearisome? Profitable, doubtless why is this so flat and stale? Because of the desire, not commercial, no, nor even utilitarian, that the good labor of the arm shall not be merely for the labor, — that it shall be productive. Tell us, ye modern men of science how much physical energy we modern men of the desk spend on pulling ourselves up by our own boot-straps.

No, if it were too much to ask that labor for health should be productive, as well as labor for money, we should not persist incorrigibly in asking. Vacations aside, let us not cease to ask how that other work which for health we must do in the course of work may be turned toward the natural end of all work. The way is nearest through that very simplicity which is craved in clearer

moments; and simplicity always demands courage. To walk home in all weathers is derogatory neither to rapid transit nor to generosity. That a few cents are saved thereby is properly an additional motive. But this means is both obvious and inadequate. Of the manual labor about my house, let each philosopher ask himself, what might be done, in the time I must give to my body, by my own hands? The heaving of coal into the furnace is a way to overcome modern complexity which many greater men may well learn of many smaller. If it seem drudgery, so will seem the daily heaving of a pulley-weight. If it seem menial — but here we are upon the ultimate hindrance to manual productivity. Of the men that will heave coal in the dark privacy of their own cellars, who dare heave it into his cellar from the public street? We may allege the grime; but we know grime is nothing to the pleasure of sweating work in open air. A certain man, defeated, but still striving, was wont to heave coal from the northwest

corner of his cellar to the southeast, and so back again. Grime he had doubly, and subterranean air; but he kept his state above ground.

The dignity of manual labor we are ready to admit, even to proclaim, with our lips. So long as we deny it in our double hearts, America is still bound by caste. A wide theme, verily! Narrow it forthwith to the sawing of wood. Coal-heaving in public is an ambition we may renounce to save our faces; but wood-sawing in the very eye of the world may be passed as an interesting eccentricity. Therefore let us not timidly saw smaller the logs that are already small enough, still confining our labor to the unproductive. Though steam has reduced the cost of cutting, cord-wood as it leaves the hand of the chopper in the forest has a lower price than the neat sections ready for the hearth. Moreover the thrifty American eye should now and then discern other chances among the wreckage of modern society. Light-wood, at least, might often

be had from the crates for whose removal we pay the dustman. The laborer for exercise is none the less worthy of his hire.

That most repulsive of modern undertakings, the erection of a gas-tank, once supplied my hearth at a rate to satisfy mind as well as body. The supporting pillars of red oak and white-wood once pounded into place by the gasping pile-driver, their ends were sawed off level with the black ooze. These butts, some three feet long and sixteen inches in diameter, were sold to all comers at a dime. The contractor's lad who carted twenty of them to my door justly demanded twenty-five cents for carrying them to the back fence. Not till I had seen him blithely shoulder log after log did it penetrate my complicated modern thought that I might have had the pleasure myself — to say nothing of the twenty-five cents. At any rate, the logs were there, through sun, rain, and snow, the good toil of leisure half-hours for months. Quartering them with wooden

wedges — they were too big for my light hand-axe — I made my blood sing over the saw-buck. This was well enough till a professor of Germanic languages inquired sharply if iron wedges were not cheap by the pound, and further, if I did not know how to dispense with wedges altogether by using an axe of proper weight. Thereupon this learned man taught me to tilt the stick and deliver the single just blow. If more professors thus fertilized learning with sagacity, exercise would oftener be directly productive. My fuel, when finally it was piled to my satisfaction, would have brought in the market three times the first cost of the material, plus the price of the axe and saw. Must not any American be honestly glad that the labor demanded for his body's health should directly serve his body's other needs?

The consideration is for plain people, for the host whose wage from bank or college or church will not stretch to a country club. Long live sport! and may its return to out-

of-doors never ebb. But beside the daily need and the large natural craving, sport remains small. When it is not for the few, it is still for the time, not for every day; and it leaves unanswered the desire of the hand to be making. Enviable indeed those few that have for avocation some muscular craft. The next generation, thanks to schools of manual training, is to provide more carpenters. True, this resource can be but occasional. That he who earns with his head eight hours a day should earn with his hand one hour, however satisfying in theory, is too exacting for practice. Practically, the daily misery of oscillation to and from the suburbs may be offset by delving, winters in clean snow, summers in mould. Only let a man plant beans as well as roses, and learn to make his patch yield. Even horses would oftener be possible, in city or country, and with double profit to muscles and lungs, if more men would be grooms. In a word, the list of opportunities is far longer than any admitted by timid convention. The incu-

bus of caste may be laughed away by whoever will view it in daylight simplicity. How many free Americans will be bound to fight for health as one that beateth the air?

A Parable of America[1]

THE YELLOW SUMMER HILLS THAT HEDGE THE Bay of San Francisco look through the pass of nations westward toward the East. Over the great new city, beyond the faint Farallones, they descry the oldest of the human old. Cathay and the way thither, the romance of the out isles, the hazard of extreme capes, recur again and again with crusted funnels and sails of foreign flags. Cathay, indeed, is here, flashing silks and lanterns in the streets, but still aloof, with Buddhist self-sufficiency rejecting the fret of the West, orientally impenetrable. But Christian foreigners have struck their diverse roots into the soil. Their ships bring, and take not back. Italian, Spanish still, and in a better sense than the invaders of our Atlantic coast, they are readily American.

[1] Much of the detail of this essay has been erased by fire. May the parable survive!

They gain America's; and America gains theirs. For here the old world touches the new most palpably; and the answering touch is frankest.

New York too has China, has more men of Italy and Greece and all other nations of the inhabited globe; but her colonies are less distinctive to the eye. Except to scrutinizing search, they are lost in the mass, their outwardly original erased by the indiscriminately human ebb and flow. The New York amateur of local color may eat many dinners in as many tongues, if he explore out of his way; but a San Franciscan must go out of his way to avoid the color that is now no less local in the new Asti than in the old. As his climate is preservative of what it brings over sea, so it calls him daily to the same out-of-door life that colors the streets of Paris and Genoa. The tobacconists of San Francisco, dispensing with shop fronts, open their trade to the pavement. To dine in France or Spain is too obvious to be a novelty where dining abroad

is habitual, and foreign cooks are most numerous as well as best. Even at the nooning, solid Americans with chin-beards walk from bank or exchange into Godin's, point out to a waiter one salad among the twenty displayed at the door, and give to a French luncheon the practiced appreciation it deserves.

Perhaps no other metropolitan district of the world has equal title with the slopes of Telegraph Hill to the name Latin Quarter. All three great Romance nations live there together in American amity. The cable-car following the long diagonal toward the heights where American wealth overlooks the Golden Gate, and beyond, where an American army-post is called the Presidio, passes on the slope whole blocks where the signs read as if apportioned equally among French, Italian, and Spanish. In the little shop beside his restaurant Luna sells clay water-jugs from every province of Mexico for the daily use of the wise. Across the way the new Buon Gusto disputes Italian

palates with the old. At Matthias's, a few steps farther, the Mexican waitress brings red wine in a goblet, while you look from your *tamale* or *enchillada* across the way to the painted canvas proclaiming the Italian marionettes, a knight tilting in mail and plume.

For not only the picturesqueness of Italy, green kerchief or yellow stomacher, but also the eloquence of her past, is daily in the eyes and ears of her fellow Americans. By the door of the stationer who supplies the reviews of Italy Mediterranean and the newspapers of Italy Pacific, hangs a sheaf of ballad broadsides, modern bandits sold with medieval lovers at three for ten cents. Such astonishing vitality has the horrid old tale of *Federico e Margherita!* The dangler of marionettes, dignified in conscious art, advances between the acts in apron and bare arms to announce at what point next evening's performance will resume the interminable and imperishable romance of *I Paladini di Francia.* Warming from

bare statement, his voice rises to romantic height, and breaks upon "*avvelenato.*" Nor does his audience of little tradesmen take chivalry less seriously. To them the crash of shining puppets in legendary battle has nothing funny. When the dwarfs swing in to fight with saucepans and pot-lids, ah! that is always so amusing after the romantic strain! And the westerner, who may then at last laugh doubly, must be dull not to feel also the thrill of a popular tradition, unbroken by the centuries and the sea, which maintains the tiara of the emperor and the green cloak of the paynim, and the little shrill boy for the parts of great dames. Nay more, he may well ask himself if this background of western life, for being imported, is any the less his own.

The idea is not startling to a man whose local history is largely Spanish. The tragedy of Spain, enacted by the Pacific as by the Mediterranean, gives to the land that longest and most largely fulfilled her old dreams of the new world an inde-

feasible historic dignity. Beside this the difference between 1649 and 1849 is trivial. And, with the sweet names by which her conquerors love to call hill and stream, she has left the tradition of elder generosity and serenity and art in life. Even the crasser American provincialism, yielding involuntarily to that constant emanation from the soil, is prepared for other lessons from far away and long ago. None the less stable politically for exacting no violation of race, the state is the richer artistically. While her German vineyards and her Italian, her Swiss dairies and her Yankee fruit-farms, alike enrich the commonwealth, they give to California life a scope and variety of background that stimulate at once the artistic education of the mass and the artistic originality of the individual. The colors of China, the forms of Japan, Italian melody and the port of Spain, could hardly be woven by fiction as here they have been woven by fact. For the incongruity of past with present and race with

race is resolved by American assimilation and adaptability.

The architecture of San Francisco remains insignificant or ugly in so far as it is the typical architecture of American cities between 1850 and 1880. It always arrests, and usually pleases, the eye, wherever it has learned of its own foreign people. Freedom of space naturally gives the first opportunity in the suburbs. The aimless American villas built at Oakland and San Rafael thirty years ago, and the incongruous New England Colonial of to-day's fashion, might be tolerably dissimulated behind their hedges of red geranium, were they not stultified by the simple fitness learned of Italy and Spain. The out-of-door climate appropriates the *pergola*, and permanently approves the Spanish lines adapted to California by priests and ranchers. These borrowings have been applied already by California architects with the liveliest originality. Against the Berkeley hills, gold-tawny background in summer,

green in winter, are set many houses that convince the eye forthwith of American capacity for creation through American quickness to adapt. Occasional freakishness in their audacity is only another proof of vigor. It refreshes far oftener than it shocks the jaded eye of the East. And the total of lively impressions is a parable for the whole country.

The appropriation and harmonizing thus seen in the lines of structure as a great American opportunity are carried out still more boldly in interior decoration. American susceptibility to art is at once vindicated and quickened by the common use of Japanese prints, Chinese porcelain and brass, Mexican clay. As all these now belong to the soil, so all are harmonized by the background of native redwood. Japanese flower-vases are fit for this other land of flowers. Japanese prints, doled out as rarities in other great centres, are here laid in sheaves on the counters of the American Japanese, and, being sold at the normal

price, are possible even to thin purses. As the architecture of the second university of California for being of the cloister is none the less collegiate, and is the more adapted to the soil, so the college student of that coast, moved to adventure the out isles alike by audacity inherited from the pioneers and by romance borrowed from the past that has come to live with him, is the more typically American. The world is come to America, to be taught, but also to teach.

My Friend Copperfield

UNLESS THE LARGE NEW EDITIONS OF DICKENS are all bought for the sitting-rooms of the vulgar, time has already proved his critics a little smug. That he is no realist has not for our romantic day the import of thirty years ago. And indeed, to insist that Dickens has no inkling of realism is to blink quite too many studies of his in that rendering of life which is the preoccupation of Mr. Hardy. The thirteenth chapter of David Copperfield, for example, has a scene in the very manner : —

" 'What do you mean,' said the tinker, 'by wearing my brother's silk handkercher? Give it over here!' And he had mine off my neck in a moment, and tossed it to the woman.

" The woman burst into a fit of laughter, as if she thought this a joke, and tossed it back to me, nodded once, as slightly as be-

fore, and made the word 'Go!' with her lips. Before I could obey, however, the tinker seized the handkerchief out of my hand with a roughness that threw me away like a feather, and putting it loosely round his own neck, turned upon the woman with an oath and knocked her down. I never shall forget seeing her fall backward on the hard road, and lie there with her bonnet tumbled off, and her hair all whitened in the dust; nor, when I looked back from a distance, seeing her sitting on the pathway, which was a bank by the roadside, wiping the blood from her face with the corner of her shawl, while he went on ahead."

But that dust and blood are demonstrably of the accident of Dickens, not of the substance. Blunderstone is said to be in Suffolk; it might be in Yorkshire, where the Squeers set, for all their jargon, are not at home. The Yarmouth fisher folk are stage properties. Barring a few pieces of amazing verity, Dickens has no local truth. His London is a city of dreams. The glamor

on his descriptions — are any more effective? — is what Ruskin, with a nice perversion of language, calls the pathetic fallacy. As the very watch of Uriah Heep has a "pale, inexpressive face," so in the haunting melancholy of the many broodings over Thames every physical detail is warped to the preconceived harmony.

In most of his characters, again, Dickens is even further from realism. Yet it is uncritical to label them all grotesques. The truth of his best characterization seems none the less secure for not being truth of realism. That gallery of vague and vulgar heroines has yet the distinct and noble sketch of Agnes Wickfield. And, not to insist on Betsey Trotwood, Micawber is what we agree to call a creation. Few men of fiction are more essentially human than that spring of hopeful grandiloquence. If the exposure of Heep is melodrama, what comedy is nearer humanity than Micawber's thrusting of the fork into his shirt front, when the untimely arrival of Littimer chilled the feast in

David's chambers? That, indeed, is a scene of half-domestic conviviality, and in the presentation of domestic happiness, as a bourgeois appanage including good cheer, the truth of Dickens has never been much contested; but to say that the Christmas stories are therefore greater than the novels is to proceed upon a false assumption. The stories are not superior in accuracy, in truth of detail. That kind of truth may be found here and there, in the novels as often as in the stories; but in either it is so far from being typical that it is obviously exceptional. What animates the Christmas stories is the feeling for good cheer, the feeling for homely joys, the feeling for homely pathos. And always the truth of Dickens is a sentimental truth. When, at his best, he realizes character, it is through imaginative grasp of feeling; when, in his inferior studies, he fails in character, it is through falsity of feeling. Mr. Peggotty's wandering search for his niece is a situation common enough on the provincial stage. In

detail, in fact, it is false; but Dickens makes it pathetically true. The truth of Dickens, maintained with inalienable affection by the people that read novels, is truth of emotion.

This is bringing Dickens into great company, the company of Victor Hugo, the company — may her other friends be for a moment civil to the cockney intruder — of Charlotte Brontë. Find in *Notre Dame* a single piece of actuality. Yet the heart answers. And the two English novelists, essentially different in quality of emotion, are yet essentially alike in that emotion defines the range of their powers. Beyond that they are both at fault. Dickens, indeed, had singular opportunities to know the facts of a certain limited range of life; but his presentation of facts even within that limited range is highly, sometimes falsely colored, and always devoted, as has been said often enough, to the extraordinary and the picturesque rather than to any consistent rendering of the normal. Charlotte Brontë knew the facts of life as little as any

novelist that ever lived. No doubt she had common-sense, and could conduct a household; none the less for that, her ignorance of the actual life of men and women is even ludicrous. Thus, far more than Dickens, but in the same manner, she prevails by imaginative grasp of emotion, as Victor Hugo prevails. Far more than Dickens; for she had not only less knowledge, but higher imagination. As if to point the distinction, she has no humor, whereas it is commonplace that Dickens is among the great humorists. It is in his humorous situations, eminently, that Dickens brings to bear such experience as he has; it is in her lack of humor, eminently, that Charlotte Brontë reveals the slightness of her hold on real life. There is the contrast; but it is a difference between geniuses essentially akin. The power of both is a poetic power. Charlotte Brontë's is a higher and especially a purer poetry; but Charles Dickens, cockney or not, had his poetry, too.

Master Vergil

FOR TRAVELLING COMPANY MOST BOOKS, LIKE most people, are too exacting. They will not yield to a mood; they will be asserting themselves against us, or tugging us aside. And why travel, especially afoot, if one cannot be lord of his day? Therefore, because it is serenely complaisant, trust the paler allurement of pure art. Take with you some fair book not human enough to challenge you on your road. *Manon Lescaut* has the simplicity of perfect breeding, a lovely purity of style for no considerable matter. Or take *The Sentimental Journey*, if you have forgotten who wrote it. But I will always take the epic of travel, the *Æneid*.

It may be the foredoom of artificial epic that it should live, if at all, by style alone. That all literature lives by style is a platitude; but in the *Æneid* the import of the matter was so thin at first that it has long

been threadbare. If the *Paradise Lost* was ever a moulding moral force, it is probably that no longer. The epic of rebellion against a doctrinaire God touches our time only in so far as its cold heresy is lost in its high beauty. Vergil's gods were from the beginning purely *ex machina ;* his hero is alien to us ; but no verse, unless it be Milton's, wins the ear more masterfully. No wonder it seemed to the Middle Age an incantation.

The purely artistic pleasure in art is given by the *Æneid* undisturbed. Homer is human, giving a pleasure as of realism, and now and again searching the heart ; Vergil, where he is human at all, is so romantically, as in the poignant fourth book. Habitually he moves but splendid shadows in armor through a colored landscape.

. . . splendet tremulo sub lumine pontus.

This soothing of our souls is not disturbed by the unreal cares of the unreal Æneas. When the ships are scattered in that magnificently theatrical storm, and the warriors,

cast dripping on the beach, instead of cooking plain food over a fire of sticks,

> . . . arida circum
> Nutrimenta dedit, rapuitque in fomite flammam.
> Tum Cererem corruptam undis Cerealiaque arma
> Expediunt fessi rerum ;

we have already forgotten them for the scenery : —

> Est in secessu longo locus : insula portum
> Efficit objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto
> Frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.
> Hinc atque hinc vastae rupes geminique minantur
> In coelum scopuli, quorum sub vertice late
> Aequora tuta silent ; tum silvis scena coruscis
> Desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbra.
> Fronte sub adversa scopulis pendentibus antrum ;
> Intus aquae dulces, vivoque sedilia saxo :

Was ever finer harmony of sound and form ?

And see how alien the hero is from us when for rare moments we are troubled by a transpiring of personality, and how little he means to us as a personality in the sum of the whole. For this the crux is the epi-

sode of Dido, surely the greatest book of all, the most cogently artistic in narrative, the most glowing in figure, the most remarkable in verse. Dido is a woman. Has Vergil another? Beside this passionate creation set in high romance the pious Æneas for a space becomes real enough to be despised; then, as he slinks off behind the divine will, lapses again into armor speaking platitude. Doubtless this impression is due in part to race. The Latin hero leaves us wondering and cold, is not to us heroic. The Southern nations seem to keep a different standard of heroic love, to value ardor more than the Northern constancy, and withal to be more demonstrative of feeling in speech than is found by us of the North consistent with heroic strength. Chaucer, whose Cressid is one of the most human figures in fiction, can make little of Troilus. Only Shakespeare has leaped this barrier; and has not even he a little Germanized his Latins, as Wagner has Germanized Tristram? But allowing that to Vergil's Romans and their descend-

ants Æneas has been more nearly than to us a man and a hero, can we suppose that he has ever seemed to any one a moving personality? At least the distinctive power of the *Æneid* is not here.

Except for Dido, what humanly reaches our sympathies now and again is something incidental, — almost, it would appear, accidental. The mother of Euryalus in the midst of her wild grief lamenting that she cannot shroud his body with the coat that had been taxing her aged hands; the affection of Mazentius for his horse Nisus and Euryalus talking low on the camp wall; the old Evander's thought of his dead wife — *Felix morte tua, neque in hunc servata dolorem* — beside the bier of his son; the mere illustrative figure of the house-wife weaving before dawn, —

> . . . castum ut servare cubile
> Conjugis, et possit parvos educere natos; —

the stuff of the *Æneid* is not these, but Laocoön in agony, the descent of Mercury,

the figures as sun on brass, more splendid than any others ever strung on so thin a thread of fable. Vergil sings arms, the sea and shore, dawn and moonlight, but not the man.

This typical absence of human appeal leaves free the enjoyment of the Æneid as a supreme work of artifice. It is a pleasure faint, doubtless, to most men, but untroubled, art for the sake of art. The just word charged with suggestion and not surcharged —

> . . . lucet via longo
> Ordine flammarum, et late discriminat agros —

the elaborate cunning of the sentences, each a pattern of rhetoric and prosody, suit well the glittering pomp, the unrelaxed etiquette. The methods of the most elaborate, the most highly colored, of the great poets, are so manifest as to appoint him perpetual teacher. Just because his habit is so far from the inimitable simplicity of Homer, Vergil is the master of poets. And as the

master of poets, so the gentle companion of those whose journeys must be far lower and more literal than Dante's. For solace as for study it is always safe to embark upon his sounding line.

The Literary Influence of Sterne in France

THE INFLUENCE OF "TRISTRAM SHANDY" ON French writers of its time, first hinted by M. Joseph Texte,[1] is one of those unaccommodating facts of literary history which warn critics against *a priori* reasoning. On the face of it, the book that should have kindled French writers is the *Sentimental Journey*. This is so obvious that it has been either taken for granted or asserted on quite insufficient evidence. How the French could miss an art so appropriate to themselves as that of the *Sentimental Journey* we may well wonder; but in fact even the first French translation does miss its distinctive artistic traits; and apparently

[1] *Jean Jacques Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisme littéraire*, etc., par Joseph Texte: Paris, 1895.

the only French critic to express adequately these distinctive traits, the difference in art between *Tristram* and the *Journey*, is M. Émile Montégut.[1]

Evidently there is need of some agreement as to what the characteristics of Sterne are in general, what habits of his expression might be supposed to have influence, and secondly, as to what separate characteristics shall be assigned to the *Sentimental Journey*. Sentimentality is easily set down first as the mark of all Sterne's work. "He parades his soul," as has been wittily said by M. Texte.[2] But so, notoriously, does Rousseau; and how shall we disengage clearly the influence of this sentimentality from that of Richardson, whose hold on France had a tenacity little short of amazing? If we differentiate it by its objects, by its dithyrambs over dead asses and its moralities upon starlings, we find very little until the time is so late that we cannot be sure. The

[1] *Essais sur la littérature anglaise*, "Sterne."
[2] *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, etc., page 351.

imitation by Mlle. de Lespinasse in her story of Mme. Geoffrin's milkmaid, not only seems too slight for more than mention, but, even if it had much greater literary importance of its own, would show at most only the vogue of Sterne's sentimentality. "To be moved at the right time," says M. Texte, "and even at the wrong time, with never a blush for it,—this is the whole secret of Sterne."[1] Surely not. If that were the whole secret of Sterne, the *Sentimental Journey* would have been buried long ago. I fear the French critics in tracking this particular sentimentality are sometimes at fault; but even supposing them to be infallible, something more and something more definite is needed to constitute a literary influence.

There is safer ground in Sterne's humor, in his pervasive equivocation, in the character of his incidental creations—Mr. Shandy, Corporal Trim, Uncle Toby. Safest measure

[1] Page 350.

of all is Sterne's form — his constant use of gesture, his random progress, his method, conversational and expository rather than narrative, narrative, indeed, only so far as to fool his readers. This is the "*œuvre décousue*" of which M. Texte speaks, "*sans plan, sans ordre.*"[1] This is Sterne, or rather this is the effect that Sterne sought and achieved; but even this is not all Sterne, for it is not yet the *Sentimental Journey*. The *Shandy* style does recur in the *Journey*, but only as the incorrigible trickery of a man who has found his art. Instead of the mad breaks and the elaborate digression of *Shandy*, the *Journey* has transitions of consummate delicacy. The *Shandy* passages of description are only hints of Sterne's skill in miniature. The *Journey*, as M. Montégut points out, is a Dutch painting of French manners. It is much more; it is the art of pure description at its finest. Nothing, I venture to think, has ever surpassed the con-

[1] Pages 351, 353.

centration, the brilliancy, and the delicacy of these tiny chapters, where there is not a word too much and not a word amiss. In a literature not habitually tolerant of description, and swinging from the large, long landscape style to the large, short poster style, these pictures of Sterne's are almost alone.

For observe that the *Sentimental Journey*, though it is beautifully coherent, is hardly more than *Tristram Shandy* narrative. It has no narrative unity; it has very little narrative progress. Sterne has narrative incidents, narrative digressions, even in *Shandy;* but he never has as his object the conduct of a story. Call him, if you will, a novelist — I will not quarrel over a word; but remember that he is not even, except by the way, a story-teller. If we call *Tristram Shandy* story because of Uncle Toby, we may almost as well call the *Spectator* story because of Sir Roger de Coverley. In *Tristram Shandy* Sterne is a whimsical, satirical essayist romping in narrative forms; in the

Sentimental Journey he is much more a describer of men and women, seeking description only, and for itself, and coloring it habitually with drama.

Dramatic description, if a label be desired, might well be pasted on the *Sentimental Journey*. The book is full of situations, but situations that lead nowhither, that are there merely for themselves. The snuff-box, the *désobligeante*, the gloves, the theatre passage — no wonder it has been a prize for the illustrators, though "indeed there was no need."

"I looked at Monsieur Dessein through and through; eyed him as he walked along in profile — then *en face* — thought him like a Jew — then a Turk — disliked his wig — cursed him by my gods — wished him at the devil —

"— And is all this to be lighted up in the heart for a beggarly account of three or four louis d'ors, which is the most I can be overreached in? — 'Base passion!' said I, turning myself about as a man naturally does upon a sudden reverse of sentiment; 'Base, ungentle

passion! thy hand is against every man, and every man's hand against thee.' 'Heaven forbid!' said she, raising her hand up to her forehead; for I had turned full in front upon the lady whom I had seen in conversation with the monk: she had followed us unperceived. 'Heaven forbid, indeed!' said I, offering her my own — she had a black pair of silk gloves, open only at the thumb and two forefingers — so accepted it without reserve, and I led her up to the door of the *remise*."

The conclusion of these differences is that *Tristram Shandy* is trick; the *Sentimental Journey* is art.

With the essential traits of Sterne in mind, general and particular, it is easy to dispose of some minor claims to his influence on French literature. Saintine's *Picciola*, says Mr. Lee in the Dictionary of National Biography, acknowledges a debt to Sterne. Of this acknowledgment one must say that it is the more generous since without it the debt would never have been suspected. *Picciola* was written in 1836, published in 1843.

It is essentially what Sterne is not at all, romantic. This appears not only in the large use of natural scenery and in the remarkable coincidences of the action, but especially in the Byronic hero. Indeed, if we must derive *Picciola*, let us look rather to the *Prisoner of Chillon*. There is none of the Sterne wit, none of the Sterne form, and, since the emotion throughout is deeper and more human, none of the Sterne tone. The main idea — the misanthropic philosopher brought by adversity and by affection for the sole plant in his prison-yard to faith, resignation, and domestic love — is utterly foreign to Sterne. Even the sentimental dilation over the plant is not in the Sterne key; it is too deep and too sincere. The only resemblance is in the dominance of emotion as ruling motive and trusty guide. Who would venture to assign that to Sterne?

It is even easier to reject *La bibliothèque de mon oncle*. Again there is an essential difference in both degree and kind. Sterne

was as insensible to the *schwärmerei* of youth as to the happiness of domestic love. The dutiful propriety of Töpffer's Henriette or Lucy he could not have appreciated, except, perhaps, as motive for an equivocal sarcasm. If the affectionate whimsicality of Uncle Tom should suggest Uncle Toby, if a rustic scene has a hint of a similar one in *Tristram Shandy*, it requires an abnormal taste for derivation to magnify these into echoes. They seem infinitely more likely to have come from life or from Töpffer's own fancy. What is much more to the point, the form of meandering reflection has but slight claim, certainly not enough to establish, or even plausibly to suggest, a connection.

What the critics had in mind who suggested Sterne in connection with Saintine or Töpffer seems to have been nothing more than reminiscence. Even reminiscence is hardly visible in these books; but it does appear here and there in unexpected places. Are such cases of deliberate borrowing what we mean by literary influence? They show

that Sterne was still read; they show that French men of letters found their account in *Tristram*, not in the *Journey;* and they show nothing more. Goethe said once to Eckermann, anent the tiresome cry of plagiarism (I paraphrase from memory), "You might as well ask a well fed man to give account of the oxen, sheep, and hogs which he has eaten and which have passed into his blood." Did Dumas even take a whole plot from an author that had failed to handle it? That is an interesting fact in the life of Dumas; it is a comparatively uninteresting fact in the history of literature, as we all know from many futile studies of so-and-so's indebtedness to so-and-so. It is not literary influence. It does not affect the forms of art.

And so one searches Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste* with misgiving, because the critics have pointed out that it opens with a passage from *Tristram Shandy*, that it has toward the end a scene very similar to one in the *Sentimental Journey*, and that in at

least one other place Diderot borrows from Sterne. Here, however, is much more than borrowing. Here is imitation, and imitation consistent enough to pique inquiry into its limits and character. At first the imitation seems too consistent; it looks like a mere paraphrase of *Shandy*, as in fact it has been called. Here are the Shandy dialogue, which Diderot prints like a play; the Shandy pauses, digressions, wheels within wheels, interpolations by the author to tease the reader, dialogue between author and reader. Here, occasionally and for satire, is even the elaboration of gesture, as in the master's repeated taking of snuff and looking at his watch. In short, Diderot has tried most of Sterne's narrative gymnastics. Superficially, *Jacques le fataliste* is a French *Tristram Shandy*.

The *Shandy* style naturally pleased a mind of Diderot's superabundance. It gave free rein to philosophizing on everything and nothing. For *Jacques* is the work of a burning mind, throwing off sparks fit

to kindle a score of stories. If Sterne's method was the pleasure of Sterne's fancy, it was for Diderot rather a vent for his prodigious fertility. He absorbed like a glutton; but he wrote always. It has been said of him that he cared only to write; to publish was a minor consideration. *Jacques* shows him writing what he chose, as, at the moment, he chose, without stint, without husbandry. The book is a quarry for any romancer that has Diderot's scent for suggestion in the work of others.

But, after all, *Jacques le fataliste* has greater consistency of form than *Tristram Shandy*, and after all, a strong sense of narrative. True, the freakish progress of *Shandy* is adopted *in toto*. The postponement of Tristram's birth and then of his breeching has its parallel in the story of the amours of Jacques, announced in the earlier part, consistently interrupted at every stage, sometimes at half-stages or even half-sentences, by the other tales that make the bulk of the volume, and finished never.

But there is much more narrative in *Jacques*. The separate stories are more numerous, and, in general, more developed, and the interpolation of essay and dialogue, though frequent, is a far smaller fraction of the whole.

Besides, though Goethe's praise of the whole as a "chef d'œuvre" seems extravagant, the threads are dropped and picked up, if not in a fixed order, at any rate with much more regularity than in *Tristram*. And not only is there a great deal of mere "yarn" of the Yankee sort told one to cap another, but Jacques the valet has more than a suggestion of the *valet picaresque*. There are decidedly picaresque adventures; and though these are sometimes interrupted by the author's satirical "Now I might make them do so-and-so, or so-and-so," Diderot gives some value to the adventure as such. In Sterne the incidental adventure counts almost as little as the whole fable.

Diderot's narrative interest and narrative

force are best exhibited in the episode of the landlady's tale of Mme. de Pommeraye. Schiller translated this into German, and it has been selected since for separate publication. No wonder. It is not only pure narrative, slightly interrupted; it is narrative of the highest order; it is, at the end of the eighteenth century, a short story done with nineteenth-century French art. Here is no hop-skip-and-jump, but a strong plot well complicated and brought to a striking solution of character. It may be said that the *dénouement* is not satisfying, not consequent on the character of one of the actors; in fact, Diderot acknowledges this by appending a clumsy explanation; but observe that the objection presupposes plot and character. This otherwise admirable narrative occupies one-fourth of the book.

The story of Mme. de Pommeraye points a contrast also in tone. It deals with passion, and passion is unknown to Sterne. His emotion is sentimental, and of this

Diderot has hardly a trace. There is, to be sure, the touching incident of the woman with the broken jug; but the beaten horse inspires no sentiment, and it is possible that this incident, like that of the landlady's pet dog, is meant as satire on Sterne.

Still more strikingly different is the tone of the satire in general. Diderot catches some of the Sterne wit, and he has some dialogue of delicate cynicism; but there are no asides so fanciful as Mr. Shandy's disquisition on the irregular verbs, and in general the essay-dialogue parts have more substance and seriousness than Sterne's. The moralizing is often rather deep; the satire, often serious, always hits harder, and is sometimes bitter to virulence. The clergy, in particular, are pursued with intent to kill. It is not merely sneer and jeer, but open and foul abuse. The hatred of the cloth is so uncontrolled as quite to o'erleap itself. The artist is lost in the revolutionist. There is none of this

animus in Sterne, whose game was always to trifle. Diderot, though he has some pleasant trifling, was anything but a trifler.

That Sterne, for all his trifling, created a few characters far more distinct and human than even Mme. de Pommeraye will be accepted without elaboration, and is the most marked difference. In the matter of morality Sterne is despicable and Diderot is outrageous. With these characteristic differences, then, *Jacques le fataliste* is an imitation of *Tristram Shandy*, an imitation not of the tone, but of the method and manner; only there is somewhat more method and much less manner. Of the *Sentimental Journey* there is nothing. The possible connection of one of the closing scenes with a similar scene notorious in the *Journey* is hardly worth mentioning. In spite of its mimic pranks, *Jacques* is story; and if *Tristram Shandy* is not story, much less is the *Sentimental Journey*.

Many years later another French story-

writer evidently lingered over his Sterne because of a preoccupation, very like Sterne's, with the finer art of description. Here surely the *Sentimental Journey* should have borne fruit. But Théophile Gautier saw not so much men and women and their drama of attitude and gesture as gorgeous hangings and outlandish scenery. He indulges extravagantly in furniture and dressmaking where Sterne passes with a hint, like the black silk gloves at Calais or the waiting-maid's purse. He riots in color and light, and Sterne manages wonderfully in his *Journey* with very little of either. Still, that Gautier remembered Sterne seems evident in *Fortunio*. Without listening for more than an echo, read the opening and the close of Chapter III in *Fortunio*, and then the whole of Chapter V. Is it not an echo, but an echo of *Tristram Shandy?*

Are there no French children, then, of the *Sentimental Journey?* There is at least one child. It is hard to mistake the parentage of Xavier de Maistre's *Voyage autour de ma*

chambre.[1] And let me say at once that I lay no stress on the eloquent tear dropped in Chapter XVIII, and noted for Sterne's by Sainte-Beuve.[2] That tear, and the repentance in Chapter XXVIII, may be drawn from Sterne's reservoir, or they may be a coincidence. Mere borrowing, as I have urged, means very little; and Maistre frankly recognizes Sterne, even alludes to him as of course familiar to his readers. "*C'est le dada de mon oncle Toby.*" Form learned from Sterne is the quest; and it is here — trick learned from *Tristram*, but also art learned from the *Journey*.

For trick, Chapter XXXIII consists of two sentences; Chapter XIII, of one; Chapter XII, of asterisks. The opening of Chapter VI is like *Tristram*, and it is like *Tristram* to have this chapter sixth instead of first.

[1] Published at Turin, 1794.

[2] *Œuvres complètes du Comte Xavier de Maistre*, etc. (1 vol.), précédée d'une notice . . . par M. Sainte-Beuve: Paris, Garnier, 1839; page xii.

CHAPITRE VI.

" Ce chapitre n'est absolument que pour les métaphysiciens. Il va jeter le plus grand jour sur la nature de l'homme : c'est le prisme avec lequel on pourra analyser et décomposer les facultés de l'homme, en séparant la puissance animale des rayons purs de l'intelligence.

" Il me serait impossible d'expliquer comment et pourquoi je me brûlai les doigts aux premiers pas que je fis en commençant mon voyage, sans expliquer, dans le plus grand détail, au lecteur, mon système *de l'âme et de la bête.* — Cette découverte métaphysique influe d'ailleurs tellement sur mes idées et sur mes actions, qu'il serait très-difficile de comprendre ce livre, si je n'en donnais la clef au commencement.

" Je me suis aperçu, par diverses observations, que l'homme est composé d'une âme et d'une bête.

. . . . . .

" Je tiens d'un vieux professeur (c'est du plus loin qu'il me souvienne) que Platon appelait la matière *l'autre.* C'est fort bien ; mais

j'aimerais mieux donner ce nom par excellence a la bête qui est jointe à notre âme. C'est réellement cette substance qui est *l'autre*, et qui nous lutine d'une manière si étrange.

. . . . . .

" Messieurs et mesdames, soyez fiers de votre intelligence tant qu'il vous plaira ; mais défiez-vous beaucoup de *l'autre*, surtout quand vous êtes ensemble."

. . . . . .

CHAPITRE VII.

" Cela ne vous paraît-il pas clair ? voici un autre example :

" Un jour de l'été passé, je m'acheminai pour aller à la cour. J'avais peint toute la matinée, et mon âme, se plaisant à méditer sur la peinture, laissa le soin à la bête de me transporter au palais du roi.

" Que la peinture est un art sublime ! pensait mon âme ;

. . . . . .

" Pendant que mon âme faisait ces réflexions, *l'autre* allait son train, et Dieu sait où elle allait ! — Au lieu de se rendre à la cour, comme

elle en avait reçu l'ordre, elle dériva tellement sur la gauche, qu'au moment où mon âme la rattrapa, elle était à la porte de madame de *Hautcastel*, à un demi-mille du palais royal.

"Je laisse à penser au lecteur ce qui serait arrivé, si elle était entrée toute seule chez une aussi belle dame"

. . . . . .

But the movement, though whimsical and interrupted, is never random or violent. It is like that of the *Journey*, now fast, now slow, flitting apparently, but always nicely calculated, and always by such delicate transitions as are almost the hall-mark of the *Journey*. Hardly one of these miniature chapters, miniature like Sterne's, but shows how closely Maistre had studied Sterne's form, how sympathetically he realized it, how skilfully he followed. Mark that artistically abrupt introduction of Mme. de Hautcastel, just quoted, and the Sterne manner even to the final equivocation. Of all this a typical instance is Chapter XI: —

CHAPITRE XI.

" Il ne faut pas anticiper sur les événements : l'empressement de communiquer au lecteur mon système de l'âme et de la bête m'a fait abandonner le description de mon lit plus tôt que je ne devais ; lorsque je l'aurai terminée, je reprendrai mon voyage à l'endroit où je l'ai interrompu dans le chapitre précédent. — Je vous prie seulement de vous ressouvenir que nous avons laissé *la moitié de moimême* tenant le portrait de madame de *Hautcastel* tout près de la muraille, à quatre pas de mon bureau. J'avais oublié, en parlant de mon lit, de conseiller à tout homme qui le pourra d'avoir un lit de couleur rose et blanc : il est certain que les couleurs influent sur nous au point de nous égayer ou de nous attrister suivant leurs nuances.— Le rose et le blanc sont deux couleurs consacrées au plaisir et à la félicité. — La nature, en les donnant à la rose, lui a donné la couronne de l'empire de Flore ; et lorsque le ciel veut annoncer une belle journée au monde, il colore les nues de cette teinte charmante au lever du soleil.

" Un jour nous montions avec peine le long d'un sentier rapide : l'aimable Rosalie était en avant ; son agilité lui donnait des ailes : nous ne pouvions la suivre. — Tout à coup, arrivée au sommet d'un tertre, elle se tourna vers nous pour reprendre haleine, et sourit à notre lenteur. — Jamais peut-être les deux couleurs dont je fais l'éloge n'avaient ainsi triomphé. Ses joues enflammées, ses lèvres de corail, ses dents brillantes, son cou d'albâtre, sur un fond de verdure, frappèrent tous les regards. Il fallut nous arrêter pour la contempler : je ne dis rien de ses yeux bleus, ni du regard qu'elle jeta sur nous, parce que je sortirais de mon sujet, et que d'ailleurs je n'y pense jamais que le moins qu'il m'est possible. Il me suffit d'avoir donné le plus bel exemple imaginable de la supériorité de ces deux couleurs sur toute les autres, et de leur influence sur le bonheur des hommes.

" Je n'irai pas plus avant aujourd'hui. Quel sujet pourrais-je traiter qui ne fût insipide ? Quelle idée n'est pas effacée par cette idée ? —Je ne sais même quand je pourrai me remettre à l'ouvrage. — Si je le continue, et que le lecteur désire en voir la fin, qu'il s'addresse à l'ange distributeur des pensées, et qu'il le prie

de ne plus mêler l'image de ce tertre parmi la foule de pensées décousues qu'il me jette à tout instant.

"Sans cette précaution, c'en est fait de mon voyage."

Clearest mark of all is the delicacy in transition, as in the opening of Chapter xv, gauged at once to bring the servant on the scene swiftly and to explain the previous allusion to the wet sponge, that not a word may be displaced or wasted.

The fulness and minuteness of gesture is not only characteristic in itself; it also shows that Maistre grasped as characteristic in this form that it should be applied to the most insignificant incidents and the smallest objects — a portrait, a house-dog, a bed, a coat, a rose, — and that it should be applied sentimentally. Maistre may have his passing sarcasm on sentimentality; but his whole book is steeped in it. In form and in tone his *Voyage* is a sentimental journey. In form and in tone there is the same subtle unity — not a unity of the fable, for the

Voyage has no more narrative unity than the *Journey*, but a descriptive unity. No wonder it closes like the *Journey*, but how much more delicately!

For the *Voyage autour de ma chambre* is not a copy. It has not a single detail demonstrably borrowed, and as a whole it is original. That is what makes its imitation at once so interesting to study and so profitable. This is literary influence, that an author, in adopting a form, should use it for himself. Thus, for instance, that Maistre should so have modified the form as to present less drama and more essay follows from the temper of Maistre. From the temper of Maistre also comes the occasional tone of oratory, the larger use of natural scenery, the very slight use of manners, the comparatively indistinct presentation of persons, the serious reflections philosophical and religious. And the nobler soul had also the freer fancy; he is less concrete or, to put it conversely, more abstract, more purely fanciful. In a word, he is always himself.

He learned from Sterne precisely as one painter learns from another.

One book, then, attests the influence on French literature of Sterne's best art, of the form of the *Sentimental Journey*. Of *Tristram* there is more imitation and far more reminiscence. Of Sterne's sentimentality apart from his form the influence, wide or narrow, is indistinguishable. Yet "Sterne is so French." After all, is he? He has the quickest sensibility to French habits of expression, but not so much to manner in word as to manners, to attitude. These idioms he read at sight; but it is doubtful that he knew French intimately enough to appreciate French style.

So there is slight promise for inquiry whether Sterne, teaching so remarkably little to France, may on the other hand have learned something from her. One looks again in his Prévost, the very man of men for Sterne; but ten pages of *Manon* bring him to a stand; a story always in motion, a story of passion, above all a style that is

what Sterne's at its best never is — artless, a lovely simplicity. Not all the tears o'er faithless Manon shed persuade me that Sterne had anything from the Chevalier des Grieux. The reminiscence of Scarron, if it be a reminiscence, is not of Scarron's form. Certain turns in the *Don Quichotte moderne* (*Pharsamon*), attributed to Marivaux, may have suggested the satirical possibilities of interrupted and tangled narrative so highly developed in *Shandy*. Further Marivaux could teach Sterne nothing as to form. For, though he realizes the descriptive value of minute physical details, he has not the art of composing them. He accumulates in ten pages a descriptive effect that Sterne compresses into one. Nor is it probable that Sterne had anything from Crébillon *fils*. He visited that worthy; he alludes in the *Journey* to his *Égarements du cœur et l'esprit;* he concocted with him the precious plan by which each was to attack the morality of the other's books; but nothing beyond these personal relations has been

suggested by the hardy explorers of Crébillon *fils*.

Sterne's best art, then, seems underived and almost uncommunicated. There is some color for calling *Tristram Shandy* Rabelaisian; but the *Sentimental Journey*, as it is one of the most exquisite pieces in literature, is also one of the most unique.

The Secret of John Bunyan

EACH RECOGNITION OF *The Pilgrim's Progress* as a classic stirs, no scruple indeed, but a latent wonder. For a classic the book has singular qualities; it is religious and it is popular — not incidentally religious, not potentially popular, but essentially religious and immediately popular. Is it a classic because of these traits or in spite of them? Very little of the great literature in any language is religious; very little, like *Robinson Crusoe* and some of Shakespeare's comedies, is popular in the full sense of being immediately loved and constantly read by the great public. And we must search far to find another classic that is both the one and the other. *The Pilgrim's Progress* stands almost alone.

True, there is hardly a great classic but touches on things divine. Divine things have

a large place in the *Æneid;* they are the substance of the *Divina Commedia* and *Paradise Lost.* But these great poems are not so much religious as theological. They speculate on the order of the universe; they symbolize abstract truths; they even embody dogmas. *The Pilgrim's Progress* differs from them sharply in being a practical guide for daily conduct, a parable of the common journey of common men. Thus it is in the literal sense religious; and it is almost our only religious classic.

Its popularity, again, is larger than the popularity of most classics. It has been read for two hundred years, not only by all English-speaking people who have a taste for literature, but also by thousands who have no taste for literature and who may never have thought of it as literary. It was the appeal of a common man to common men; and it has been really read and re-read, not simply heard of and admired, by plain people everywhere. To popularity of this kind there are few parallels. One thinks

of *Robinson Crusoe*, and then halts for another instance. Popularity in some degree, of course, every classic must have, in order to become a classic, in order to survive. But it was a small literary circle that fostered the fame of the *Æneid* in its own time, and a comparatively small class that kept it alive in a strange fashion through the middle ages. We can hardly compare ancient popularity with modern, because ancient writers could hardly reach what we now call the public, for lack of the printing press. But Milton had the press; and though he could thus, in something of our modern sense, appeal to the public, yet his very appeal for the liberty of that press reached the few, not the many. *Paradise Lost*, like the *Æneid*, must always be the joy and admiration of the intellectually superior. It is over the heads of the crowd. Now the crowd is the proper audience of Bunyan. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is popular in the sense that it is one of the very few literary classics written of the people, for the people, almost by the people.

In this twofold character, religious and popular, *The Pilgrim's Progress* will always remind us of its country and its age. It is a product of English Puritanism. For the Puritan movement may be summed up as at once religious and popular, both blended in one. It was a great effort for popular government in Church and State. It set itself against hierarchy and monarchy alike; it overthrew both the king and the bishops. The immediate practical result in politics was the Commonwealth, and, in religion, the spread of the congregational organization and mode of worship. These results, and the many others that followed from them, proceeded from a single, dominant Puritan principle — the independence of the individual man in the kingdom of earth and the kingdom of heaven.

Written at the flood tide of popular government, and of protest, dissent, and individual assertion in religion, *The Pilgrim's Progress* has a tang of Puritanism. "Conviction for sin," "awakenings for sin,"

"professors" of religion, — these words of "the language of Canaan" were common religious speech in the thatched midland cottages at whose doors Bunyan mended pots and pans, and in the rough-hewn New England houses where his great book found quick sympathy. He speaks for the soldiers of Cromwell and of Miles Standish, much more for that unknown multitude who, though no warriors, felt the call to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. He speaks for the people that could say unabashed, man to man, "How stands it between God and your soul now?"

The position of such men among their "worldly" fellows, the feelings of each party toward the other, have never been more surely divined, never more vividly expressed, than by Bunyan. "There is a company of these crazed-headed coxcombs," says Mr. Obstinate, "that when they take a fancy by the end are wiser in their own eyes than seven men that can render a reason." "Too precise," "some peevish or melancholy man," —

phrases like these continually echo what is exhibited fully in Faithful's account of Shame and in the whole chapter on Vanity Fair. Sometimes, indeed, Bunyan seems Puritan in that less pleasing sense which brought the name into reproach. As many men of Bunyan's day resented in the Puritans that self-satisfaction and censoriousness which are pilloried in Malvolio, so some readers have resented the dialogues with Talkative and Ignorance. Something unkind, something Pharisaical, is easily seen by the world in those who feel bound to protest against the world. But whether this attitude was essential in Puritanism or not, certainly it was not essential in John Bunyan. Arrogance was not one of his sins. Uncompromising as the stiffest of them all on every point of principle, he yet shows in the ground of all his work a large and positive charity. His creed was no stronger than his love.

For to say that in its religious and its popular character *Pilgrim's Progress* bespeaks its time is not to limit it by its time. It

bears the character of Puritanism only in its less significant traits. If the words that went from Bedford jail to all Christendom occasionally bespeak the Puritan, they always bespeak something too large to be measured by Bunyan's environment. Still less can they be measured by the outward events of his own life. As with most really great authors, we rather understand the man from the book than the book from the man. But for the inner life Bunyan's case shows a striking exception. That life of the mind which is the only significant life of a great author, is not merely expressed as authors commonly express themselves in their works; it is also recorded. *Grace Abounding* is the autobiography of his soul. This is in truth the life of John Bunyan, and the only life that tells us why he could write for all mankind. For this book reveals his amazing faculty of vision, his power, that is, to see the invisible things of the spirit. Seeing them as it were before his eyes, he felt them as most men feel the love or the loss of a friend;

he struggled to win them as most men struggle for money or fame. This makes the Puritan tinker, "of a low and inconsiderable generation," great in the kingdom of heaven. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is at once popular and religious because its author was at once utterly a man of the people and utterly a man of God. All things were lacking in his life which might have hindered direct and constant touch with ordinary men and women, with the real people of this world; and he had courage of faith to put all things from him which might have hindered his constant touch with the other world. His expression of the spiritual world is most simple and homely because he himself was simpler and homelier than any other Englishman who ever took a pen; but it is most intense because he himself was a fellow-citizen with the saints.

These two essential traits of the man, the religious and the popular, made him a preacher; and his preaching in turn reacted upon them, developing and enhancing them

to the highest. If we think of Bunyan as he thought of himself, we must think of him as a preacher of the spiritual life to common men. True, his great and abiding works are not sermons; but the sermon instinct and training are behind all; and, in a larger sense, there is in all his work a certain oral character, as if the printed words had first been spoken. Speech sounded in his ears, struggled to his lips, and was directed to the ears rather than the eyes of others.

Indeed, Bunyan's preaching habit occasionally delays the story of *The Pilgrim's Progress* by rather tedious sermon-heads, as in the reply to Ignorance; but such passages are not characteristic. These occasional disputations are of the age rather than of the man. They are not his own way. He was not a reasoner. He did not know how to convince men by a logical series of paragraphs. The headings and sub-headings of his sermons may be merely false framework, set up because everybody about him thought that the way to make a sermon. The

strength of his preaching was not there, but in his faculty of vision and his faculty of speech. He pictured vividly in his own mind both things and thoughts; he had a seeing imagination. And to an equally extraordinary degree he had the gift to utter what he saw and felt in words that would make his hearers see and feel too. His gift of speech was so great that he had to speak. He had to express himself. No bar could stop him; not ignorance, for he contrived to learn enough from the poorest hints; not repression, for prison merely forced him to write what he would have spoken. He might well cry in the apostolic words, "Woe is me if I preach not." The faculty of vision, the faculty of spiritual emotion, above all, the faculty of imparting both visions and emotions in speech, these powers appear plainly, throughout Bunyan's work, in three corresponding qualities. First, all his characteristic work is very concrete. It is what we now call picturesque. It is full of images. Even when he explains, he habitually falls into

description. As his mind habitually turned abstract ideas into images, so his speech is habitually in terms of things actually seen. All *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a vision; and this his greatest work is merely the best embodiment of his constant habit. Secondly, his appeal is not to the intellect, but to the feelings. Finally, all his work is essentially oral. Most of it that was written was first spoken. Much of it was never written. And even when he wrote to be read, instead of speaking to be heard, his forms of expression are more oral than those of any other English writer except the orators. Bunyan should be read aloud. It seems as if he wrote aloud.

The first of his cardinal qualities, that habit of concrete and specific words, came from his faculty of vision. "Remember your tears and prayers to God, yea, how you sighed *under every hedge* for mercy. . . . Have you forgot the *close*, the *milk-house*, the *stable*, the *barn* . . . where God did visit your soul?" The dullest reader must feel, because he

must see. Bunyan makes mental states real by making them almost visible and tangible. With him a figure of speech is not merely a form of expression; it is *the* form of expression. He sees it in his mind; it takes shape; and as he sees it, so he utters it. "By these things my mind was now so turned that it lay like a horse-leech at the vein, still crying out, 'Give, give.'" Or again, "I often, when these temptations had been with force upon me, did compare myself to the case of such a child whom some gypsy hath by force took up in her arms, and is carrying from friend and country. Kick sometimes I did, and also shriek and cry; but yet I was bound in the wings of the temptation, and the wind would carry me away."

These concrete, specific, figurative forms of expression are not added to illustrate or adorn. They express the thought faithfully as he thought it. For him to think was to see. His power of vision is not the mastery of a literary device; it is the development of the habit of his brain. No one should doubt that

the images in which he presents the spiritual experiences of *Grace Abounding*, far from being chosen to illustrate that experience, are the very facts of the experience itself. "I could also," he says earnestly at the end of his introduction, "have stepped into a style much higher than this . . . and could have adorned all things more than here I have seemed to do; but I dare not. God did not play in tempting of me; neither did I play when I sunk as into the bottomless pit, when the pangs of hell caught hold upon me. Wherefore I may not play in relating of them, but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was."

Therefore we may confidently accept as faithful, literal record the many passages such as the following, and see in them what a brain was his instrument. "At last, when I was as it were quite worn out with fear lest it should not lay hold on me, these words did sound suddenly within my heart: 'He is able.' But methought this word *able* was spoke loud unto me. It showed a great word;

it seemed to be writ in great letters." Remarkable as this seeing imagination is in itself, it is no more remarkable than its close associations with his gift of speech. As he thinks, he sees; and as he sees, he hears words or wishes to utter them. There is the physical basis of Bunyan's genius, the brain that could speak so that all men might see.[1]

Grace Abounding, indeed, is in every way the best commentary on Bunyan. It even records, among his earlier experiences, one that not only typifies the mental habits which underlay his peculiar literary power,

[1] Professor Royce, in an investigation of the widest interest, has translated *Grace Abounding* into the terms of modern psychology. The record should be read entire; but a brief quotation will suggest its drift. "Automatic internal vision . . . with extraordinary detail and with strong emotional accompaniment . . . a frequent incident in Bunyan's inner life . . . became the main source of his peculiar artistic power." And, again, rejecting the theory of hallucination, he interprets Bunyan's torments as systematized, insistent motor speech-functions. (Josiah Royce: *The Case of John Bunyan, Psychological Review*, vol. i. (1894), pages 22, 134, 230.)

but also seems like the nucleus of *The Pilgrim's Progress.*

"About this time the state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus, in a kind of vision, presented to me. I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain. Now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, concluding that if I could, I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

"About this wall I bethought myself to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At the last I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little door-way in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well nigh quite beat out by striving to get in. At last, with great striving, methought I at first did

get in my head, and after that, by a sidling striving, my shoulders and my whole body. Then I was exceeding glad, went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun."

When we thus comprehend that Bunyan's allegory was not a literary method deliberately adopted for literary effect, but the expression by a born speaker of the images in which he habitually thought, we understand better why *The Pilgrim's Progress* has been, and is still, and perhaps always will be, more popular than any other allegory ever written. Allegory has sometimes been more popular as a literary form than it is now; but typically it precludes popular appeal by seeming artificial. All the beauty of *The Faery Queene* could not make it popular; for since the Red Cross Knights of allegory are figures delicately contrived, not persons seen, their combats are shadows. But Bunyan's images, whether of persons or of actions or of feelings, are the main facts of his life. They were as actual to him as the tools of his

tinkering trade. He was a common man, speaking the common speech; Spenser was an aristocrat, speaking the language of the court. There is the other important reason for the difference. The main reason, however, is that Bunyan's realization of things unseen is not made by literary contrivance, but born of reality.

For to his extraordinary realization of his own mental images was added an intimate knowledge of other men. Though his inner life, as has been said, determined his habits and character to a very unusual degree, though it was by far the greater part of him, yet it was not all. He was not a recluse. He was a common workman, with a family to support by a trade that took him to the doors of all sorts of common men. He was a preacher, not writing for unknown readers, but speaking to the feelings and wills of particular people. It was by the practical effort to bring peace to other men's souls that he confirmed peace in his own. He knew the people to whom he preached. He counselled

them as their brother and pastor. He talked more than he preached. He preached and talked more than he wrote. He dealt every day with sin and repentance, hope, despair, selfishness, fickleness, faith, — not as they are presented in books, not merely as he saw them in himself, but as he actually found them in this man and that woman. So the men and women in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, though they are made by an extraordinary imagination, are made out of close observation. He made them, not out of himself, but out of the real men and women of Bedfordshire. Few novels have more convincing pieces of characterization than the episode of Mr. By-Ends or the trial of Faithful.

That Bunyan was no novelist any one may satisfy himself by reading *Mr. Badman*. Nevertheless, in spite of its tediousness as a story, *Mr. Badman* gives abundant proof of the breadth, accuracy, and intimacy of Bunyan's acquaintance with the twistings of human character. Indeed, the book fails, not merely from being too sermonizing, but

from being too documentary. It is a series of bare human facts without the vivifying of his imagination; but it is documentary proof, if any were needed, of his wide knowledge of human nature outside of himself. "Yet have I as little as may be," he says in the preface, "gone out of the road of mine own observation of things. Yea, I think I may truly say, to the best of my remembrance, all the things that I here discourse of, I mean as to matters of fact, have been acted upon the stage of this world even many times before mine eyes." The difference between *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Mr. Badman* is in artistic imagination. The former is idealized and so made universally appealing; the latter is merely stated and explained, as on the witness stand. But both reveal the eye that saw into other men as well as into himself.

Bunyan's power over the emotions follows naturally from his power of vision. But in another way also it was a necessity of his nature, in that he could not appeal much to reason. His thoughts did not move logically;

and he had no logical training. Ideas with him were hardly seen and followed, but rather felt and passionately held. It was no course of doctrine or chain of reasons that he got from the Bible, but only a throng of texts that seemed to struggle within him. "A piece of a sentence," he writes in *Grace Abounding* "darted in upon me;" and, a few pages later:

"'Lord,' thought I, 'if both these scriptures should meet in my heart at once, I wonder which would get the better of me.' So methought I had a longing mind that they might come both together upon me. Yea, I desired of God they might. Well, about two or three days after, so they did indeed. They bolted both upon me at a time, and did work and struggle strongly in me for a while. At last that, about Esau's birthright, began to wax weak, and withdraw, and vanish; and this, about the sufficiency of grace, prevailed with peace and joy."

This is hardly an intellectual process; it is almost pure feeling.

So the common belief that a writer's power to make others feel vibrates from the intensity of his own experience is in Bunyan's case verified to the utmost. From his inward agonies and triumph, from going down himself, as he says, into the deep, he learned how to stir men's souls. The dark first part of *Grace Abounding* explains that moving power of which he writes so explicitly, though so modestly, in the last part. His power to stir spiritual emotions came from his own enlarged spiritual capacity.

"To me the writings of John Bunyan have been and are more and more *as the odour of a field which the Lord hath blessed*, redolent of that goodness and sweetness, that unworldliness and love of Christ, that humility and horror of sin, which I take to mark the presence of the spirit of God, even in the midst of much human infirmity and delusion. It is not easy for an Englishman, Catholic or Protestant, who understands Bunyan, to read him with dry eyes and without feeling his heart softened to impressions of

grace."[1] That was written by a Catholic; and Bunyan's kinship of spirit with many whose spiritual environment was utterly different is suggested by a passage in *Grace Abounding* which reminds one of St. Francis and St. Cuthbert: "I thought I could have spoken of his love and have told of his mercy to me even to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me."

Further interpretation of Bunyan's style seems to have been baffled by that rare sincerity which makes his utterance an almost perfect medium. His style is obviously colloquial. That in itself explains little — nay rather seems itself to demand explanation; for Bunyan is not quite colloquial in the ordinary sense. He is not colloquial as a man of letters permits himself to be colloquial. He is colloquial because he is oral. This oral quality of his style, closely related to its con-

[1] Joseph Rickaby, "St. Ignatius and John Bunyan," *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, volume 27, page 295.

creteness and its emotional character, summing up at once its religious and its popular significance, may even be called his distinctive note. For it runs through all his expression. That his life was preaching, that much of his written work was first spoken, has already been said, and also that his strongest native impulse was speech. It may well be remembered also that even when his works seem furthest from preaching he often writes in a kind of dramatic dialogue. But, more widely, his characteristic work sounds less like writing than like talk. It is homely and familiar — and no other author seems quite so homely, quite so familiar — because it is colloquial in the literal sense. With fearless simplicity his diction follows the ways of common speech. It is not literary in the ordinary sense; it is even illiterate, for his many revisions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* left it in many places incorrect; it is simply what a genius made of the actual every-day talk of the street.

His racy popular proverbs are worth col-

lecting as picturesque summaries of the worldly wisdom of our ancestors. Some of them are still current to-day.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
Every fat must stand upon his own bottom.
A saint abroad and a devil at home.
A waterman, looking one way and rowing another.

The Pilgrim's Progress has many another; and as many more may be found in *Mr. Badman.*

It is ill puddling in a cockatrice's den.
They run hazards that hunt the wild boar.
All was fish that came to his net.
Hedges have eyes, and little pitchers have ears.
The bird in the air knows not the notes of the bird in the snare.
Penny wise and pound foolish.
Like to like, quoth the devil to the collier.

Quite like them is Bunyan's own homeliness. "As for those that made boggle and stop at things," he says in *Mr. Badman,* " and that could not in conscience, and for fear of death and judgment, do such things as he, he would call them fools and noddies, and charge them with being frighted with the talk

of unseen bugbears." And again, "Fluster and huff and make ado for a while he may; but God hath determined that both he and it shall melt like grease." One of the prettiest instances is a figure. "Some cry out against sin even as the mother cries out against the child in her lap, when she calleth it slut and naughty girl, and then falls to hugging and kissing it." Readers who are startled at "gallons of blood," or disgusted at his enlarging upon the scriptural figure of vomit, may find in Bunyan's style some of the faults, as well as all the virtue, of common speech. But alike in its great force and its little nicety, it is thoroughly communal. It is the nearest approach in our literature to the very voice of the people.

Thus to be as it were the inspired mouthpiece for common English speech was perhaps less Bunyan's choice than his necessity. He hardly knew any other diction. He made literature unconsciously; for he was anything but a man of letters. Without laying

undue stress on the fact that at thirty he was still an illiterate tinker, it is but emphasizing the essential character of his education to say that he was almost independent of books. When we remember how far even the most original authors have formed their styles upon their reading, we must see in Bunyan a startling exception. His mind had so extraordinarily few literary associations to work upon that it moved naturally by the oral associations of common speech. That fact, for it is a fact, explains almost by itself why his style, more constantly than any other great author's is thoroughly popular. Undoubtedly he meant it to be so; but undoubtedly he could not, without violating all truth of expression, have made it otherwise.

Of course Bunyan did know one book exceptionally well. He knew the English Bible. He thumbed it from cover to cover. He read it daily. He almost lived on it. He knew much of it by heart; for he quotes widely from memory. The English Bible, then,

must have influenced his style. So to some degree it did. But the inference, made by most critics, that he formed his style on the Bible, is quite too large. The point is worth investigation, for the better understanding of a great and singular genius. To begin with, we should not forget that many passages in Bunyan which at first suggest our Bible do so simply because they belong to the same century. We hastily call them Biblical because they seem somewhat archaic. Now the English Bible was occasionally archaic even for its own time, because the translators deliberately retained some passages from older versions. Moreover, their translation was made seventeen years before Bunyan was born; and the language was changing more rapidly then than it changes now. But, making due allowances for these facts, we may still convince ourselves by comparison that many of the so-called Biblical phrases in Bunyan are common seventeenth-century English.

Further, we must determine whether the

style of the Bible much influenced the style of Bunyan by studying just how. How does Bunyan use the Bible? In a word, he uses it, not as a literary model, but as any preacher uses it to-day, — by quotation. All his work is full of quotations, not only texts quoted entire, but phrases inserted verbatim or adapted to the construction of his own sentences. They are, as it were, sewed on rather than woven in. They are readily distinguishable from his own texture. For his own style remains distinct and different. Almost any page of *The Pilgrim's Progress* will show this twofold character. As in a mixture of oil and vinegar, the two elements mingle without uniting. When Bunyan is quoting, he is not like the Bible; he *is* the Bible. When he is not quoting, he is not like the Bible; he is like common speech. From the very nature of his subjects his quotations from the Bible are exceptionally frequent; but their effect on his own style is no less exceptionally small. No man of letters using the Bible so much and so exclusively could well have felt

its style so little. The last thing in the Bible that affected Bunyan was its style. To him its subject was too overwhelming to leave much room for other impressions. To him it was simply the word of God. But for a few sentences of his, we could hardly be sure that he was even aware it had a style.

One of the surest and most delicate tests is his susceptibility to its rhythm and other harmonies; for the influence of the Bible style on other styles is clearest in this one quality. To use instances widely different, Sir Thomas Browne and John Ruskin both echo at impassioned moments the grand cadences of the English translation of the minor prophets. But Bunyan seems rather deaf to these. His rhythms seem very slightly affected by the rhythms of the English Bible.[1] Rather they are the simpler, more spontaneous rhythms

[1] This in spite of Professor Dowden's assertion (*Puritan and Anglican*, page 249) that "their music lived within the cells of his fancy," whatever that may mean.

of communal emotion, the prose poetry of common feeling.[1]

As if to confirm the conclusion that Bunyan's style was not formed on the English Bible, he has another trait which, though hardly marked by critics, is none the less remarkable. His style is highly alliterative. Rhythm seems to have meant little to him, and the rhythms of the English Bible still less; but alliteration evidently meant much. His associations of words seem to have sprung less from cadence and measure than from initial sounds. Both kinds of recurrence, both rhythm and alliteration, may of course be traced in classic English prose as elements of its harmony, and had a great deal more, doubtless, to do with the actual composition than we are wont to assume; but in Bunyan's mind rhythm seems to have meant comparatively little, and alliteration correspondingly much.

[1] Some readers will find incidental corroboration of this in metrical rhythms such as "neither afraid of the chain nor cage, nor yet of bloody death," and will remember Charles Dickens.

"So Christian turned out of his way to go to Mr. Legality's *h*ouse for *h*elp; but be*h*old, when he was now got *h*ard by the *h*ill, it seemed so *h*igh, and also that side of it that was next the wayside did *h*ang so much over, that Christian was afraid to venture further, lest the *h*ill should fall on his *h*ead." "After a *l*ittle *l*aying of *l*etters together, he found . . . that was the pillar of *s*alt into which *L*ot's wife was turned when she was going to *S*odom for *s*afety, which *s*udden and amazing *s*ight," etc. "I cannot tell who to com*p*are them to so fitly as to them that *p*ick *p*ockets in the *p*resence of the judge, or that will cut *p*urses under the gallows. It is *s*aid of the men of *S*odom that they were *s*inners exceedingly because they were *s*inners before the Lord." (The latter alliteration is adopted from the Bible, but increased.) Giant Despair "*g*etteth him a *g*rievous *c*rab-tree *c*udgel, and *g*oes down." Little Faith "was one of the *w*eak, and therefore he *w*ent to the *w*alls."

Quotations might easily be multiplied, and many instances are more delicate; but the last one gives the clue. "Went to the walls" is a proverbial phrase. Bunyan's speech is highly proverbial; and English

proverbial expressions are quite commonly alliterative. It was very probably his intimacy with common speech that made his associations habitually alliterative; or, to put it the other way, his alliteration is one of the signs that his style is oral. When Bunyan wrote "he espied a *f*oul *f*iend coming over the *f*ield," he echoed a traditional combination of words almost as old as English; and he echoed it almost certainly from oral tradition. Here is a link in the unseen chain of human speech suddenly made visible. It suggests how intensely national, how intensely English, is this man who, receiving his mother tongue from his mother's lips, handed on what he received, — not English changed or fixed by books, but English spoken by the forefathers.

We cannot regard as accidental, then, the likeness of certain finer passages to the older English poetry, and even sometimes to the very staves of oldest English: "Thus man, while blind, doth *w*ander, but *w*earieth himself with vanity; for he knoweth not the *w*ay

to the city of God." "*F*ear *f*ollowed me so hard that I *f*led the next way." And the lovely opening of this great vision recalls the opening of another vision, written three centuries before for common men in the common speech by another English prophet, — the *Vision of Piers Plowman.* "As I walked," says the Pilgrim —

" As I *w*alked through the *w*ilderness of this *w*orld,
I *l*ighted on a certain place where was a *d*en.
And I *l*aid me *d*own in that place to *s*leep;
And as I *s*lept I *d*reamed a *d*ream."

Now hear the far voice of the Ploughman:

. . . . . .

" I was *w*ery for*w*andred, and *w*ent me to reste
Under a *b*rode *b*ank by a *b*ornes side.
And as I *l*ay and *l*ened and *l*oked in the wateres,
I *s*lombered in a *s*lepyng, it *s*weyved so merye."

No, in the last analysis, Bunyan's style is as unliterary as possible, as uninfluenced by literature, as true to the ways of common spoken speech, — in a word, as oral as any style that was ever put into a book. It is the speech of a genius; but it is still common

speech. It is common speech transmuted by an intense originality. As the artistic expressive instinct of other authors uses their literary inheritance in ways so individual as to show their own creative originality, so Bunyan used the popular oral inheritance. There is his originality. He used the common speech; but he used it as it had never been used before. He talked like Tom, Dick, and Harry; but he talked as they could never dream of talking, in that he talked like himself.

Perhaps it is not insisting too much to add that only so could he have talked like himself. He could hardly have talked like books without turning aside to think of style. Books are so large a part of the lives of most authors that literary diction can pass into their styles naturally, without deliberate artifice; books were so small a part of his life that they could not well have passed into his style without conscious effort to make style. Any such effort would have violated his sincerity. Sincerity is the touchstone of all

great style; but in Bunyan it is so nearly pure as almost to constitute his greatness. His style is so nearly a pure medium, so nearly the absolute, unaffected expression of himself, that one can hardly refrain from calling it perfect. Its crowning merit is that it cannot long be thought of as style. Come to him as you will; examine his expression critically as a work of art; you will not be long in forgetting everything but his message. He compels you to forget his language, to forget himself, to forget everything but the unseen things which are eternal. His style is a moral victory. Born an artist, he spent his life in sacrificing his art to the glory of God and the salvation of men. That is why *The Pilgrim's Progress* is at once our great religious and our great popular classic.

Three Studies In The Short Story

I. THE QUESTION OF DERIVATION

QUESTIONS OF LITERARY DERIVATION CANNOT be finally answered for the tale, any more than for other literary forms, without large citation and analysis in particular. But, a review for types, an attempt to classify the late Greek, late Latin, and medieval forms may now advance such discussion by helping to revise its hypothesis. Stories being primarily for pleasure, and the pleasure of decadent Greece being largely carnal, it can give no long amazement to find that the tales popular beside the Mediterranean of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies were erotic and often frankly obscene. Known as Milesian tales, doubtless from the bad eminence of some collection in the Ionian city of pleasure, they set a fashion for those Roman studies in the naturally and the unnaturally

sexual of which the type is the *Satyricon* of Petronius. The famous tale of the Matron of Ephesus, which has more consistency than most of this collection, reveals at once how far such pieces went in narrative form. Clearly a capital plot for a short story, it is just as clearly not a short story,[1] but only a plot. It is like a modern narrative sketch or study, like the scenario for a play. And in this it is as other tales of its class. The rest, the majority, are simply anecdote. They are such stories as men of free life and free speech have in all ages told after dinner. That is their character of subject; that is their capacity of form. For the narrative compactness and finish conspicuous in the fifteenth idyll of Theocritus, in the anecdote opening the seventh oration of Dio Chrysostom, and in a few other late Greek and Latin instances of the short-story manner, startle the modern investigator precisely

[1] The distinction implied here rests upon that standard exposition, *The Philosophy of the Short-Story*, by Professor Brander Matthews.

because they are exceptional. Speaking broadly, the short tales of antiquity are never short stories in our modern sense. They are either anecdote or scenario.

Of the longer tale of antiquity a convenient type is the *Daphnis and Chloe* ascribed to Longus. A plot no less ancient than that of the foundling reared in simple life and ultimately reclaimed by noble parents receives from the Greek author the form of a pastoral romance, with episodes, complications, and a fairy-tale ending. This form persists in the short romances of the middle age. The type is clear in the most familiar of these, such as *Amis and Amiloun*. As at the close of the ancient time an author here and there had tried the terser form which we now call short story, so in the middle age. That extraordinary group of Anglo-Norman writers who in the twelfth century made the English court a centre of literary influence was composed of conscious literary artists. And one man among them achieved in Latin prose two short stories as distinct and in-

genious in form as any ever achieved in modern times. That man was Walter Map. His name has been so long a battle-ground of theorists upon the cycles of long romances that his undisputed pieces of short narrative, collected in the volume now known as *De Nugis Curialium*, have been unduly neglected. Attentive reading of that volume reveals Map experimenting in several distinct forms of tale, and recognizes among these experiments two short stories of consummate workmanship in the form — *De Societate Sadii et Galonis*, and *De Sceva et Ollone Mercatoribus*. But Map's literary discovery was not followed up. It had no discernible literary influence. The time of the short-story form as a distinct literary method was postponed for centuries.

Meantime the typical medieval form for short narratives remained what we see in *Amis and Amiloun*, the short romance or tale. Between such typical short romances and the modern short story there is the same difference of form as between Chaucer's tale of

the Man of Law, which is one of the former, and his tale of the Pardoner, which foreshadows how such material may be handled in the way of the latter. For Chaucer, as in his *Troilus and Criseyde* he anticipates the modern novel, so in his Pardoner anticipates the modern short story. The middle age and the Renaissance, like antiquity, show isolated, sporadic instances of short story, whether in prose or in verse; but these are apart from the drift of the time. Aside from such sporadic cases, the medieval tale or short romance shows no advance in narrative form. For the tale is a constant form from Greece — even from India and Egypt, down to the present. In form the Alexandrian *Daphnis and Chloe*, the medieval *Amis and Amiloun*, and the whole herd of modern tales, such as Miss Edgeworth's, are essentially alike. The modern time has differentiated two forms: first, the novel, in which character is progressively developed, incidents progressively complicated and resolved; second, the short story, in which character and action are so

compressed as to suggest by a single situation without development. The former is as it were an expansion of the tale; the latter, a compression. In both cases the modern art of fiction seems to have learned from the drama. Meantime the original, naïve form has endured, and doubtless will endure. To employ the figure of speech by which M. Brunetière is enabled to speak of literature in terms of evolution, the tale is the original jackal. From it have been developed two distinct species; but their parent stock persists. Indeed, for aught we can see from the past, posterity may behold a reversion to type.

The exceptions to this traditional mode, striking as they seem to us, in no case gained vogue enough to fix a new type. For the middle age, then, the twofold division into anecdote and summary romance will include practically all short narratives. Both the division and the sporadic exceptions are clear in the greatest medieval collection, the *Decameron* (1353) of Boccaccio. More than half the tales of the *Decameron*

may readily be grouped as anecdote — all of the sixth day, for instance, most of the first and eighth, half of the ninth. Of these some approach consistency of form. Having long introductions, unnecessary lapse of time, or other looseness of structure, they still work out a main situation in one day or one night; they sometimes show dramatic ingenuity of incident; less frequently they reach distinct climax. Where the climax, as in the majority of cases, is merely an ingenious escape or a triumphant retort, of course the tale remains simply anecdote; but in some few the climax is the result of the action, is more nearly a culmination. This is the character of the seventh day. The other type of the *Decameron* rapidly summarizes a large plot, the action ranging widely in time and place. A narrative sketch, usually of a romance, it corresponds essentially to the *Amis and Amiloun* type,[1] and includes nearly one half. Here

[1] This, perhaps, is typically the *novella;* but Boccaccio will not fix the term: "intendo di raccontare cento *novelle o favole o parabole o istorie, che dire*

was an open mine for the romantic drama of later centuries. The *Decameron*, then, is almost all either anecdote or summary romance.

But not quite all. Besides those tales which seem to show a working for consistency, there are a few that definitely achieve it. The fourth of the first day (The Monk, the Woman, and the Abbot) is compact within one place and a few hours. All it lacks for short story is definite climax. Very like in compactness is the first of the second day (The Three Florentines and the Body of the New Saint). Firmer still is the eighth of the eighth day (Two Husbands and Two Wives). Here the climax is not only definite, but is a solution, and includes all four characters. If it is not convincing, that is because the *Decameron* is hardly concerned with characterization. The action covers two days. It might almost as easily have been kept within one. Finally there are two tales

le vogliamo . . . nelle quali *novelle . .* " *Preface to the Decameron.*

that cannot, without hair-splitting, be distinguished from modern short story. The second tale of the second day (Rinaldo, for his prayer to St. Julian, well lodged in spite of mishap) is compressed within a single afternoon and night and a few miles of a single road. The climax is definitely a solution. The movement is largely by dialogue. In a word, the tale is a self-consistent whole. Equally self-consistent, and quite similar in method, is that farce comedy of errors, the sixth tale of the ninth day (Two Travellers in a Room of Three Beds), which Chaucer has among his Canterbury Tales. Both these are short stories. If the other three be counted with them, we have five out of a hundred.[1]

[1] For reference in more detailed study of medieval forms, this tentative classification of the *Decameron* may be tabulated as follows: —

anecdote		55
(a) *simple anecdote*	34	I, all but nov. 4; III, nov. 4; V, nov. 4; VI, entire; VIII, all but nov. 7 & 8; IX, nov. 1 & 7–10.
(b) *anecdote more artistically elaborated*	21	

The middle age, then, had the short story, but did not recognize, or did not value, that opportunity. Not only does Boccaccio employ the form seldom and, as it were, quite casually, but subsequent writers do not carry it forward. In fact, they practically ignore it. *Les cent nouvelles nouvelles* (1450–1460), most famous of French collections, shows no discernment of Boccaccio's nicer art. In form, as in subject, there is no essential change from the habit of antiquity. True, here and there among the everlasting *histoires grivoises* is a piece of greater consistency and artistic promise. That delicious

III, nov. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6; V, nov. 10; VII, entire; VIII, nov. 7; IX, nov. 2–5.	
summary romance or tale	40
II, nov. 3–10; III, nov. 7–10; IV, entire; V, all but nov. 4 & 10; X, entire.	
approaching short story	3
I, nov. 4; II, nov. 1; VIII, nov. 8.	
short story	2
II. nov. 2; IX, nov. 6.	
	100

story (the sixth *nouvelle*) of the drunken man who insisted on making his confession on the highway to a priest unfortunately passing, who had absolution at the point of the knife, and then resolved to die before he lapsed from the state of grace, is not only a short-story plot; it goes so far toward short-story form as to focus upon a few hours. Yet even this hints the short story to us because we look back from the achieved form. After all, it remains anecdote; and it has few peers in all the huge collection. Bandello (1480–1562), in this regard, shows even a retrogression from Boccaccio. His brief romances are looser, often indeed utterly extravagant of time and space. His anecdotes, though they often have a stir of action, show less sense of bringing people together on the stage. So the *Heptameron* (1558–1559) of the Queen of Navarre fails — so in general subsequent tale-mongers fail — to appreciate the distinctive value of the terser form. Up to the nineteenth century the short story was merely sporadic. It was achieved now and again by

writers of too much artistic sense to be quite unaware of its value;[1] but it never took its place as an accepted form.

Thus the modern development of the short story in France has both its own artistic interest and the further historical interest of background. When Charles Nodier (1783–1844), in the time of our own Irving, harked back from the novel to the tale, he but followed consciously what others had followed unconsciously, a tradition of his race. Some of Nodier's legends are as medieval in form as in subject. But when he wrote *La combe a l'homme mort* he made of the same material something which, emerging here and there in the middle age, waited for definite acceptance till Nodier's own time — a short story. The hypothesis that Nodier was a master to Hawthorne is not supported by any close likeness. Yet there are resemblances. Both loved to write tales for children; both lapse toward the overt moral and fall easily into

[1] For instance, by Diderot, in the tale of Mme. de Pommeraye, discussed at page 60.

essay; both use the more compact short-story form as it were by the way and not from preference. *Smarra* (66 pages, 1821), acknowledging a suggestion from Apuleius, is an essentially original fantasy, creating the effect of a waking dream. The nearest English parallel is, not Hawthorne, but De Quincey, or, in more elaborate and restrained eloquence, Landor. *Smarra*, as Nodier says in his preface, is an exercise in style to produce a certain phantasmagorical impression. The clue to the effect he sought is given by the frequent quotations from the *Tempest*. It is "such stuff as dreams are made on." *Jean Francois-les-bas-bleus* (1836) and *Lidivine*, on the other hand, are almost documentary studies of character. *La filleule du Seigneur* (1806), legendary anecdote like Irving's, shows where Nodier's art began. He carried his art much further; but his pieces of compactness, like *La combe à l'homme mort*, are so rare that one may doubt their direct influence on the modern development of form.

For the bulk of Nodier's work is not *conte*, but *nouvelle*. These two terms have never been sharply differentiated in French use. *Les cent nouvelles nouvelles* are not only shorter, in average, than the *novelle* of Boccaccio; they are substantially like the *Contes de la Reine de Navarre*. Some of the *nouvelles* of Nodier, Mérimée, and Gautier are indistinguishable in form from the *contes* of Flaubert, Daudet, and Maupassant. But though even to-day a collection of French tales might bear either name, the short story as it grew in distinctness and popularity seems to have taken more peculiarly to itself the name *conte*. Correspondingly *nouvelle* is a convenient name for those more extended tales, written sometimes in chapters, which in English are occasionally called novelettes, and which have their type in *Amis and Amiloun*. In this sense Nodier's writing is mainly, and from preference, *nouvelle*. Taking as his type for modern adaptation the medieval tale, he did not work in the direction of short story.

Nor, oddly enough, did Mérimée. People who assign to him the rôle of pioneer in the short story, on account of his extraordinary narrative conciseness, appear to forget that his typical tales — *Carmen*, *Colomba*, *Arsène Guillot*, are too long for the form; and that many of his shorter pieces — *L'enlévement de la redoute*, *Tamango*, *La vision de Charles XI.*, are deliberately composed as descriptive anecdotes. Mérimée's compactness consists rather in reducing to a *nouvelle* what most writers would have made a *roman* than in focusing on a single situation in a *conte*. *Carmen*, though compact in its main structure, has a long prelude. Beyond question the method is well adapted; but it shows no tendency to short story. And the habit is equally marked in *Le vase étrusque*, with its superfluous characters. Evidently his artistic bent, like Hawthorne's, like Nodier's, was not in that direction. All the more striking, therefore, are his few experiments. *La Venus d'Ille* (1837) is definitely and perfectly a short story. Giving the antecedent

action and the key in skilful opening dialogue, it proceeds by a series of increasingly stronger premonitions to a seizing climax. Like Poe, Mérimée intensifies a mood till it can receive whatever he chooses, but not at all in Poe's way. Instead, the mystery and horror are accentuated by a tone of worldly-wise skepticism. Less compressed, too, than Poe, he can be more "natural." Withal he keeps the same perfection of grading. Strange that a man who did this once should not have done it oftener. But the single achievement was marked enough to compel imitation.

That the propagation of the short story in France owes much to Balzac might readily be presumed from the enormous influence of Balzac's work in general, but can hardly be held after scrutiny of his short pieces in particular. Of these, two will serve to recall the limitations of the great observer. *El Verdugo* (1829), though it is reduced to two days and substantially one scene, hardly realizes the gain from such compression.

Instead of intensifying progressively, Balzac has at last to append his conclusion, and for lack of gradation to leave his tale barely credible. *Les Proscrits* (1831), more unified in imaginative conception, and again limited in time-lapse, again fails of that progressive intensity which is the very essence of Poe's force and Mérimée's. It is not even held steady, but lapses into intrusive erudition and falls into three quite separate scenes. Others of Balzac's short pieces, *La messe de l'athée* (1836), for example, and *Z. Marcas* (1840), are obviously in form, like many of Hawthorne's, essays woven on anecdote or character. Some of his tales may, indeed, have suggested the opportunity of different handling. Some of them, at any rate, seem from our point of view almost to call for that. But his own handling does not seem, as Poe's does, directive. And in general, much as Balzac had to teach his successors, had he much to teach them of form?

The tales of Musset, which are but incidental in his development, and are confined,

most of them, within the years 1837–1838, show no grasp of form. Gautier, even more evidently than Mérimée, preferred the *nouvelle*. Few even of his most compact *contes*, such as *Le nid de rossignols*, compress the time. He was garrulous; he had read Sterne;[1] above all, he was bent, like Sterne, on description. But Gautier too shows a striking exception. *La morte amoureuse*, though it has not Poe's mechanism of compression, is otherwise so startlingly like Poe that one turns instinctively to the dates. *La morte amoureuse* appeared in 1836; *Berenice*, in 1835. The *Southern Literary Messenger* could not have touched the boulevards in a year. Indeed, the debt of either country to the other can hardly be proved. Remarkable as is the coincident appearance in Paris and in Richmond of a new literary form, it remains a coincidence.

The history of the tale in England, however important otherwise, is hardly distinct enough as a development of form to demand

[1] See page 63.

separate discussion here. For England, apparently trying the short-story form later than France and the United States, apparently also learned it from them. Perhaps the foremost short-story writers of our time in English — though that must still be a moot point — are Kipling and Stevenson. But Stevenson's short story looks to France; and Kipling probably owes much to the American magazine. Without venturing on the more complicated question of the relations of Germany, Russia, and Scandinavia to France, it is safe to put forward as a working hypothesis that the new form was fixed by France and America, and by each independently for itself. Our priority, if it be substantiated, can be but of a year or two. The important fact is that after due incubation the new form, in each country, has germinated and spread with extraordinary vigor. Daudet, Richepin, Maupassant — to make a list of French short-story writers in the time just past, is to include almost all writers of eminence in fiction. What is true of France

is even more obviously true of the United States. Our most familiar names in recent fiction were made familiar largely through distinction in the short story. The native American yarn, still thriving in spontaneous oral vigor, has been turned to various art in *The Jumping Frog* and *Marjorie Daw* and *The Wreck of the Thomas Hyke.* The capacity of the short story for focusing interest dramatically on a strictly limited scene and a few hours, no less than its capacity for fixing local color, is exhibited most strikingly in the human significance of *Posson Jone.* Mr. James, though his preoccupation with scientific analysis demands typically, as it demanded of Mérimée, a somewhat larger scope, vindicates his skill more obviously in such intense pieces of compression as *The Great Good Place.* To instance further would but lead into catalogue. In a word, the two nations that have in our time shown keenest consciousness of form in fiction have most fostered the short story. For ourselves, we may find in this development of a literary

form one warrant for asserting that we have a literary history.

II. THE TALE IN AMERICA BEFORE 1835

How few years comprise the history of American literature is strikingly suggested by the fact that so much of it can be covered by the reminiscence of a single man of letters.[1] A life beginning in the '20's had actual touch in boyhood with Irving, and seized fresh from the press the romances of Cooper. And if the history of American literature be read more exclusively as the history of literary development essentially American, its years are still fewer. "I perceive," says a foreign visitor in Austin's story of *Joseph Natterstrom*, "this is a very young country, but a very old people." Some critics, indeed, have been so irritated by the spreading of the eagle in larger pretensions as to deprecate entirely the phrase "American literature." Our literature, they retort, has

[1] Donald G. Mitchell, *American Lands and Letters.*

shown no national, essential difference from the literature of the other peoples using the same language. How these carpers accommodate to their view Thoreau, for instance, is not clear. But waiving other claims, the case might almost be made out from the indigenous growth of one literary form. Our short story, at least, is definitely American.

The significance of the short story as a new form of fiction appears on comparison of the staple product of tales before 1835 with the staple product thereafter. 1835 is the date of Poe's *Berenice*. Before it lies a period of experiment, of turning the accepted anecdotes, short romances, historical sketches, toward something vaguely felt after as more workmanlike. This is the period of precocious local magazines, and of that ornament of the marble-topped tables of our grandmothers, the annual. Various in name and in color, the annual gift-books are alike, externally in profusion of design and gilding, internally in serving up, as staples of their miscellany, poems and tales. Keepsakes

they were called generically in England, France, and America; their particular style might be *Garland* or *Gem*. The *Atlantic Souvenir*, earliest in this country, so throve during seven years (1826–1832) as to buy and unite with itself (1833) its chief rival, the *Token*. The utterly changed taste which smiles at these annuals, as at the clothes of their readers, obscures the fact that they were a medium, not only for the stories of writers forgotten long since, but also for the earlier work of Hawthorne. By 1835 the *New England Magazine* had survived its infancy, and the *Southern Literary Messenger* was born with promise. Since then — since the realization of the definite form in Poe's *Berenice*, the short story has been explored and tested to its utmost capacity by almost every American prose-writer of note, and by many without note, as the chief American form of fiction. The great purveyor has been the monthly magazine. Before 1835, then, is a period of experiment with tales; after 1835, a period of the manifold exercise of the short

story. The tales of the former have much that is national in matter; the short stories of the latter show nationality also in form.

Nationality, even provinciality, in subject-matter has been too much in demand. The best modern literature knows best that it is heir of all the ages, and that its goal should be, not local peculiarity, but such humanity as passes place and time. Therefore we have heard too much, doubtless, of local color. At any rate, many purveyors of local color in fiction have given us documents rather than stories. Still there was some justice in asking of America the things of America. If the critics who begged us to be American have not always seemed to know clearly what they meant, still they may fairly be interpreted to mean in general something reasonable enough, — namely, that we ought to catch from the breadth and diversity of our new country new inspirations. The world, then, was looking to us, in so far as it looked at all, for the impulse from untrodden and picturesque ways, for a direct transmission of

Indians, cataracts, prairies, bayous, and Sierras. Well and good. But, according to our abilities, we were giving the world just that. Years before England decided that our only American writers in this sense were Whitman, Mark Twain, and Bret Harte, — seventy years before the third of this perversely chosen group complacently informed the British public that he was a pioneer only in the sense of making the short story American in scenes and motives, — American writers were exploring their country for fiction north and south, east and west, up and down its history. What we lacked was, not appreciation of our material, but skill in expressing it; not inspiration, but art. We had to wait, not indeed for Bret Harte in the '60's, but for Poe in the '30's. The material was known and felt, and again and again attempted. Nothing could expose more vividly the fallacy that new material makes new literature. We were at school for our short story; but we had long known what stories we had to tell. In

that sense American fiction has always been American.

What were the forms of this evident endeavor to interpret American life in brief fictions; and, more important, what was the form toward which they were groping? For this inquiry the natural point of departure is the tales of Irving. Any reappreciation of Irving would now be officious. We know that classical serenity, alike of pathos and of humor; and we have heard often enough that he got his style of Addison. Indeed no attentive reader of English literature could well fail to discern either Irving's schooling with the finest prose of the previous century — with Goldsmith, for instance, as well as Addison — or the essential originality of his own prose. He is a pupil of the *Spectator*. That is a momentous fact in the history of American literature. We know what it means in diction. What does it mean in form? That our first eminent short fictions were written by the pupil of a school of essayists vitally affected their structure. The matter of the

Spectator suggested in England a certain type of novel; its manner was not the manner to suggest in America the short story, even to an author whose head was full of the proper material. For though it may be hard to prove in the face of certain novels that an essay is one thing and a story another, it is obvious to any craftsman, *a priori*, that the way of the essay will not lead to the short story. And in fact it did not lead to the short story. The tales of Irving need no praise. Composed in the manner typical of the short story, they might have been better or worse; but they are not so composed. It was not at random that Irving called his first collection of them (1819–20) *The Sketch Book*. *The Wife*, for instance, is a short-story plot; it is handled, precisely in the method of the British essay, as an illustrative anecdote. So *The Widow and Her Son;* so *The Pride of the Village*, most evidently in its expository introduction; so, in essence of method, many of the others. And *Rip Van Winkle?* Here, indeed, is a difference, but

not, as may at first appear, a significant difference. True, the descriptive beginning is modern rather than Addisonian; romanticism had opened the eyes of the son of the classicals; but how far the typical looseness of romanticism is from the typical compactness of the short story may be seen in Irving's German tale of the *Spectre Bridegroom*, and it may be seen here. True again, the characterization, though often expository, is deliciously concrete; but it is not more so than the characterization of Sir Roger de Coverley; nor is Rip's conversation with his dog, for instance, in itself the way of the short story any more than Sir Roger's counting of heads in church. Unity of tone there is, unity clearer than in Irving's models, and therefore doubtless more conscious. But Irving did not go so far as to show his successors that the surer way to unity of tone is unity of narrative form. Still less did he display the value of unity of form for itself. His stories do not culminate. As there is little emphasis on any given incident, so there is no

direction of incidents toward a single goal of action. Think of the Catskill legend done *à la mode*. Almost any clever writer for tomorrow's magazine would begin with Rip's awakening, keep the action within one day by letting the previous twenty years transpire through Rip's own narrative at the new tavern, and culminate on the main disclosure. That he might easily thus spoil *Rip Van Winkle* is not in point. The point is that he would thus make a typical short story, and that the *Sketch Book* did not tend in that direction. Nor as a whole do the *Tales of a Traveller*. Not only is *Buckthorne and His Friends* avowedly a sketch for a novel, but the involved and somewhat laborious machinery of the whole collection will not serve to move any of its separable parts in the short-story manner. Even the *German Student*, which is potentially much nearer to narrative singleness, has an explanatory introduction and a blurred climax. Such few of the Italian bandit stories as show compression of time remain otherwise, like the

rest, essentially the same in form as other romantic tales of the period. In narrative adjustment Irving did not choose to make experiments.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Irving's influence, so far as it is discernible in subsequent short fictions, seems rather to have retarded than to have furthered the development toward a distinct form. Our native sense of form appears in that the short story emerged fifteen years after the *Sketch Book;* but where we feel Irving we feel a current from another source moving in another direction. Rather Irving left the writers for the annuals and abortive early magazines to feel after a form. What were the modes already accepted; and what were their several capacities for this shaping? The moral tale, of course, is obvious to any one who has glanced over the literary diversions of his forbears; and this, equally of course, had often its unity of purpose. But since the message, instead of permeating the tale by suggestion, was commonly formulated in expository introduc-

tion or hortatory conclusion, it did not suffice to keep the whole in unity of form. Indeed, the moral tale was hardly a form. It might be mere applied anecdote; it might be the bare skeleton of a story, as likely material for a novel as for a short story; it was often shapeless romance.

Another typical ingredient of the annual salad is the yarn or hoax-story. The significance of this as American has often been urged; and indeed it spread with little seeding, and, as orally spontaneous, has made a favorite diversion of the frontier. Its significance in form is that it absolutely demands an arrangement of incidents for suspense. The superiority of form, however, was associated, unfortunately for any influence, with triviality of matter. Again, the annuals are full of short historical sketches. Sometimes these are mere summary of facts or mere anecdote, to serve as explanatory text for the steel engravings then fashionable as "embellishments"; sometimes they are humorous renderings of recent events; more commonly

they are painstaking studies, — Delia Bacon's, for instance, or Charlotte Sedgwick's, in the setting of American Colonial and Revolutionary history; most commonly of all, whether native or foreign, modern or medieval, they are thorough-going romances, running often into swashbuckling and almost always into melodrama. The tendency to melodramatic variety, with the typical looseness of romanticism, then everywhere dominant in letters, held the historical sketches back from compactness, or even definiteness, of form. So clever a writer as Hall leaves many of his historical pieces with the ends loose, as mere sketches for novels. The theoretical difference between a novelette and a short story is thus practically evident throughout this phase of the annuals in lack of focus.

Still the studies of historical environment were more promising in themselves and also confirmed that attempt to realize the locality, as it were, of the present or the immediate past which emerges as *genre* or local color. The intention of Miss Sedgwick's

Reminiscence of Federalism (1835) is the same as that of Miss Wilkins's stories of the same environment. Her *Mary Dyre* comes as near in form as Hawthorne's *Gentle Boy* to extracting the essence of Quakerdom. Where her studies fail is in that vital intensity which depends most of all on compression of place and time. Now an easier way toward this was open through the more descriptive sketch of local manners. To realize the genius of a place is a single aim; to keep the tale on the one spot is almost a necessity; to keep it within a brief time by focusing on one significant situation is a further counsel of unity which, though it had not occurred to American writers often, could not be long delayed. Thus, before 1835, Albert Pike had so far focused his picturesque incidents of New Mexico as to burn an impression of that colored frontier life; and James Hall, in spite of the bungling unnecessary time-lapse, had so turned his *French Village* (1829) as to give a single picture of French colonial manners.

Hawthorne, indeed, had gone farther. His affecting *Wives of the Dead* (1832) is brought within the compass of a single night. If the significance of this experiment was clear to Hawthorne, then he must have abandoned deliberately what Poe seized as vital; for he recurred to the method but now and then. The trend of his work is quite different. But there is room to believe that the significance of the form escaped him; for as to literary method, as to form, Hawthorne seems not to see much farther than the forgotten writers whose tales stand beside his in the annuals. An obvious defect of these short fictions is in measure. The writers do not distinguish between what will make a good thirty-page story and what will make a good three-hundred-page story. They cannot gauge their material. Austin's *Peter Rugg* is too long for its best effect; it is definitely a short-story plot. Many of the others are far too short for any clear effect; they are definitely not short-story plots, but novel plots; they demand development of

character or revolution of incidents. Aristotle's distinction between simple and complex plots underlies the difference between the two modern forms. Now even Hawthorne seems not quite aware of this difference. The conception of *Roger Malvin's Burial* (1832) demands more development of character than is possible within its twenty-eight pages. The sense of artistic unity appears in the expiation at the scene of guilt; but the deficiency of form also appears in the long time-lapse. *Alice Doane's Appeal* (1835) is the hint of a tragedy, a conception not far below that of the *Scarlet Letter*. For lack of scope the tragic import is obscured by trivial description; it cannot emerge from the awkward mechanism of a tale within a tale; it remains partial, not entire. Like *Alice Doane*, *Ethan Brand* is conceived as the culmination of a novel. To say that either might have taken form as a short story is not to belittle Hawthorne's art, but to indicate his preference of method. *Ethan Brand* achieves a picturesqueness more

vivid than is usual in Hawthorne's shorter pieces. The action begins, as in Hawthorne it does not often begin, at once. The narrative skill appears in the delicate and thoroughly characteristic device of the little boy; but imagine the increase of purely narrative interest if Hawthorne had focused this tale as he focused *The White Old Maid;* and then imagine *The White Old Maid* itself composed without the superfluous lapse of time, like *The Wives of the Dead.* That Hawthorne seems not to have realized distinctly the proper scope of the short story, and further that he did not follow its typical mode when that mode seems most apt, — both these inferences are supported by the whole trend of his habit.

For Hawthorne's genius was not bent in the direction of narrative form. Much of his characteristic work is rather descriptive. *Sunday at Home*, *Sights from a Steeple*, *Main Street*, *The Village Uncle*, — to turn over the leaves of his collections is to be reminded how many of his short pieces are like

these. Again, his habitual symbolism is handled quite unevenly, without narrative sureness. At its best it has a fine, permeating suggestiveness, as in *The Ambitious Guest;* at its worst, as in *Fancy's Show Box*, it is moral allegory hardly above the children's page of the religious weekly journal. Lying between these two extremes, a great bulk of his short fiction shows imperfect command of narrative adjustments. The delicate symbolism of *David Swan* is introduced, like fifty pieces in the annuals, whose authors were incapable of Hawthorne's fancy, by formal exposition of the meaning. The poetry of the *Snow Image* is crudely embodied, and has also to be expounded after the tale is done. The lovely morality of the *Great Stone Face* has a form almost as for a sermon. The point for consideration is not the ultimate merit of Hawthorne's tales, but simply the tendency of their habit of form. For this view it is important to remember also his bent toward essay. Description and essay, separately and together, sum up the

character of much of his work that was evidently most spontaneous. Perhaps nothing that Hawthorne wrote is finer or more masterly than the introduction to the *Scarlet Letter*. For this one masterpiece who would not give volumes of formally perfect short stories? Yet if it is characteristic of his genius — and few would deny that it is — it suggests strongly why the development of a new form of narrative was not for him. This habit of mind explains why the *Marble Faun*, for all the beauty of its parts, fails to hold the impulse of its highly imaginative conception in singleness of artistic form. In his other long pieces Hawthorne did not so fail. The form of the novel he felt; and it gave him room for that discursiveness which is equally natural to him and delightful to his readers. But the form of the short story, though he achieved it now and again — as often in his early work as in his later — he seems not to have felt distinctly. And, whether he felt it or not, his bent and preference were not to carry it forward.

III. POE'S FIXING OF THE SHORT-STORY FORM

For the realization and development of the short-story form lying there *in posse*, the man of the hour was Poe. Poe could write trenchant essays; he turned sometimes to longer fictions; but he is above all, in his prose, a writer of short stories. For this work was he born. His artistic bent unconsciously, his artistic skill consciously, moved in this direction. In theory and in practice he displayed for America and for the world a substantially new literary form. What is there in the form, then, of Poe's tales which, marking them off from the past, marks them as models for the future? Primarily Poe, as a literary artist, was preoccupied with problems of construction. More than any American before him he felt narrative as structure; — not as interpretation of life, for he lived within the walls of his own brain; not as presentation of character or of locality, for there is not in all his tales one man, one

woman, and the stage is "out of space, out of time"; but as structure. His chief concern was how to reach an emotional effect by placing and building. When he talked of literary art, he talked habitually in terms of construction. When he worked, at least he planned an ingeniously suspended solution of incidents; for he was always pleased with mere solutions, and he was master of the detective story. At best he planned a series progressively intensifying a single emotion, an edifice of creative, structural imagination.

This habit of mind, this artistic point of view, manifests itself most obviously in harmonization. Every detail of setting and style is selected for its architectural fitness. The Poe scenery is remarkable not more for its original, phantasmal beauty or horror than for the strictness of its keeping. Like the landscape gardening of the Japanese, it is in each case very part of its castle of dreams. Its contrivance to further the mood may be seen in the use of a single physical detail as a recurring dominant, — most crudely in the

dreadful teeth of Berenice, more surely in the horse of Metzengerstein and the sound of Morella's name, most subtly in the wondrous eyes of Ligeia. These recurrences in his prose are like the refrain of which he was so fond in his verse. And the scheme of harmonization includes every smallest detail of style. Poe's vocabulary has not the amplitude of Hawthorne's; but in color and in cadence, in suggestion alike of meaning and of sound, its smaller compass is made to yield fuller answer in declaring and sustaining and intensifying the required mood. Even in 1835, the first year of his conscious prose form, the harmonizing of scene and of diction had reached this degree: —

"But one autumnal evening, when the winds lay still in heaven, Morella called me to her bedside. There was a dim mist over all the earth, and a warm glow upon the waters; and, amid the rich October leaves of the forest, a rainbow from the firmament had surely fallen.

"'It is a day of days,' she said, as I approached; 'a day of all days either to live or

die. It is a fair day for the sons of earth and life — ah, more fair for the daughters of heaven and death!'

"I kissed her forehead, and she continued:

"'I am dying; yet shall I live.'

"'Morella!'

"'The days have never been when thou couldst love me — but her whom in life thou didst abhor, in death thou shalt adore.'

"'Morella!'

"'I repeat that I am dying. But within me is a pledge of that affection — ah, how little! — which thou didst feel for me, Morella. And when my spirit departs shall the child live — thy child and mine, Morella's.'"

If the pattern of the phrase is not yet so masterly as Poe's later habit, it is already almost the last word of adaptation.

Yet in all this Poe simply did better what his predecessors had done already. His harmonizing of scene, of style, was no new thing. The narrative form itself needed more artistic adjustment. To begin with what now seems to us the commonest and most obvious defect, the narrative mood and the narrative

progress must not be disturbed by introductory exposition. Not only the ruck of writers for the annuals, but even Irving, but even sometimes Hawthorne, seem unable to begin a story forthwith. They seem fatally constrained to lay down first a bit of essay. Whether it be an adjuration to the patient reader to mind the import, or a morsel of philosophy for a text, or a bridge from the general to the particular, or an historical summary, or a humorous intimation, it is like the juggler's piece of carpet; it must be laid down first. Poe's intolerance of anything extraneous demanded that this be cut off. And though since his time many worthy tales have managed to rise in spite of this inarticulate member, the best art of the short story, thanks to his surgery, has gained greatly in impulse. One can almost see Poe experimenting from tale to tale. In *Berenice* he charged the introduction with mysterious suggestion; that is, he used it like an overture; he made it integral. In *Morella*, the point of departure being similar, the theme

is struck more swiftly and surely, and the action begins more promptly. In *King Pest*, working evidently for more rapid movement, he began with lively description. *Metzengerstein* recurs to the method of *Berenice;* but *Ligeia* and *Usher*, the summit of his achievement, have no introduction, nor have more than two or three of the typical tales that follow.

"True! nervous — very, very dreadfully nervous, I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses — not destroyed — not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily — how calmly I can tell you the whole story."

The Tell-Tale Heart (1843).

Every one feels the force for this tale of this method of beginning; and to many story-readers of to-day it may seem obvious; but it was Poe, more than any one else, who taught us to begin so.

The idea of this innovation was, negatively, to reject what is from the point of view of narrative form extraneous; positively it was to make the narrative progress more direct. And the evident care to simplify the narrative mechanism for directness of effect is the clue to Poe's advance in form, and his most instructive contribution to technic. This principle explains more fully his method of setting the scene. The harmonization is secured mainly by suppression. The tale is stripped of every least incongruity. In real life emotion is disturbed, confused, perhaps thwarted; in art it cannot be interpreted without arbitrary simplification; in Poe's art the simplification brooks no intrusive fact. We are kept in a dreamland that knows no disturbing sound. The emotion has no more friction to overcome than a body in a vacuum. For Poe's directness is not the directness of spontaneity; it has nothing conversational or "natural"; it is the directness of calculation. So he had little occasion to improve his skill in dialogue.

Dialogue is the artistic imitation of real life. He had little use for it. His best tales are typically conducted by monologue in the first person. What he desired, what he achieved, what his example taught, was reduction to a straight, predetermined course. Everything that might hinder this consistency were best away. So, as he reduced his scene to proper symbols, he reduced it also, in his typical tales, to one place. Change of place, lapse of time, are either excluded as by the law of the classical unities, or, if they are admitted, are never evident enough to be remarked. What this meant as a lesson in form can be appreciated only by inspecting the heavy machinery that sank many good tales before him. What it means in ultimate import is the peculiar value and the peculiar limitation of the short story — in a word, its capacity as a literary form. The simplification that he set forth is the way to intensity; but perhaps Hawthorne saw that it might be the way to artificiality.

The history, then, of the short story — the

feeling after the form, the final achievement, will yield the definition of the form. The practical process of defining by experiment compiles most surely the theoretical definition. And to complete this definition it is safe to scrutinize the art of Poe in still other aspects. His structure, appearing as harmonization and as simplification, appears also as gradation. That the incidents of a tale should be arranged as progressive to a climax is an elementary narrative principle not so axiomatic in the practice, at least, of Poe's time as to bind without the force of his example. Even his detective stories, in their ingenious suspense and their swift and steady mounting to climax, were a lesson in narrative. But this is the least of his skill. The emotional and spiritual effects that he sought as his artistic birthright could be achieved only by adjustments far more subtle. The progressive heightening of the style corresponds to a nice order of small details more and more significant up to the final intensity of revelation. Little suggestion is laid to

suggestion until the great hypnotist has us in the mood to hear and feel what he will. It is a minute process, and it is unhurried; but it is not too slow to be accomplished within what before him would have seemed incredible brevity. The grading of everything to scale and perspective, that the little whole may be as complete, as satisfying, as any larger whole — nay, that any larger treatment may seem, for the time of comparison, too broad and coarse, — this is Poe's finer architecture. But for him we should hardly have guessed what might be done in fifteen pages; but for him we should not know so clearly that the art of fifteen pages is not the art of a hundred and fifty.

Berenice casts a shadow first from the fatal library, chamber of doubtful lore, of death, of birth, of prenatal recollection "like a shadow — vague, variable, indefinite, unsteady; and like a shadow, too, in the impossibility of my getting rid of it while the sunlight of my reason shall exist." The last words deepen the shadow. Then the "boy-

hood in books" turns vision into reality, reality into vision. Berenice flashes across the darkened stage, and pines, and falls into trances, "disturbing even the identity of her person." While the light from her is thus turning to darkness, the visionary's morbid attentiveness is warped toward a monomania of brooding over trivial single objects. For the sake of the past and visionary Berenice betrothed with horror to the decaying real Berenice, he is riveted in brooding upon her person — her emaciation — her face — her lips — her teeth. The teeth are his final curse. The rest is madness, realized too horribly, but with what final swiftness of force! No catalogue of details can convey the effect of this gradation of eight pages. Yet *Berenice* is Poe's first and crudest elaboration. The same static art in the same year moves *Morella* more swiftly through finer and surer degrees to a perfectly modulated close in five pages. His next study, still of the same year, is in the grotesque. The freer and more active movement of *King Pest*

shows his command of the kinetic short story of incident as well as of the static short story of intensifying emotion. By the next year he had contrived to unite in *Metzengerstein* the two processes, culminating intensity of feeling and culminating swiftness of action, for a direct stroke of terror and retribution. By 1836 Poe knew his art; he had only to refine it. Continuing to apply his method of gradation in both modes, he gained his own peculiar triumphs in the static, — in a situation developed by exquisite gradation of such infinitesimal incidents as compose *Berenice* to an intense climax of emotional suggestion, rather than in a situation developed by gradation of events to a climax of action. But in both he disclosed the fine art of the short story in drawing down everything to a point.

For all this was comprehended in Poe's conception of unity. All these points of technical skill are derived from what he showed to be the vital principle of the short story, its defining mark, — unity of impression through strict unity of form. "Totality

of interest," an idea caught from Schlegel, he laid down first as the principle of the short poem,[1] and then as the principle of the tale.[2] And what this theory of narrative should imply in practice is seen best in Poe. For Hawthorne, though he too achieves totality of interest, is not so surely a master of it precisely because he is not so sure of the technic. His symbolism is often unified, as it were, by logical summary; for Poe's symbolism summary would be an impertinence. Poe's harmonization, not otherwise, perhaps, superior to Hawthorne's, is more instructive as being more strictly the accord of every word with one constantly dominant impression. His simplification of narrative mechanism went in sheer technical skill beyond the skill of any previous writer in opening a direct course to

[1] In a review of Mrs. Sigourney, *Southern Literary Messenger*, volume ii, page 113 (January, 1836); quoted in Woodberry's *Life of Poe*, page 94.

[2] In a review of Hawthorne, *Graham's Magazine*, May, 1842; Stedman and Woodberry's edition of Poe, volume vii, page 30; quoted in the appendix to Brander Matthews's *Philosophy of the Short-Story*.

a single revealing climax. His gradation, too, was a progressive heightening and a nice drawing to scale. All this means that he divined, realized, formulated the short story as a distinct form of art. Before him was the tale, which, though by chance it might attain self-consistency, was usually and typically incomplete, either a part or an outline sketch; from his brain was born the short story as a complete, finished, and self-sufficing whole.

The University Press, Cambridge, U. S. A.